

CATERING VANS

HELPING THE HOMELESS

FRUIT VINAIGRETTES

THE MONTHLY MAGAZINE OF THE NATIONAL RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION

VOL. 10 NO. 10 NOVEMBER 1990

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RESTAURANTS USA

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1/23 Boston, MA

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11/19 Nashville, TN

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Note: All Chicago seminars are held in the educational foundation's conference center at 250 South Wacker Drive.

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The Executive Study Groups present semi-annual professional development programs for executives who would like to meet with their industry peers to share ideas and concerns. Executives in each of the aforementioned disciplines from member foodservice companies are welcome and encouraged to participate.

RESTAURANTS USA

VOL. 10 NO. 10 NOVEMBER 1990

Senior Director Editor Jeffrey R. Prince
Sylvia Rivchun-Somerville
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Managing Editor Staff Contributors
Jennifer Batty Nancy Michalski
Elizabeth Gordon Susan Mills
Robert E. Paul Moomaw
Harrington Anne Papa Curtis
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Philip Kralovec Denise Roach
Andrew Linda Way
McLaughlin Diane Welland

Art Direction Magazine: Tom Bellucci
Covers: Richard Earle

Editorial Secretary Ronda Bowers

Word Processing Operator Agnes Harkins
Intern Zari Malsawma

Editorial office and association headquarters 1200 Seventeenth St., N.W.
Washington DC 20036-3097
(202) 331-5900
Chicago office 150 N. Michigan Ave., Suite 2000
Chicago, IL 60601
(312) 853-2525

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STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND CIRCULATION			
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1 NEW ENGLAND

Location: Higganum, CT
Association member: J. Andrew Engelhardt
Operation: Glockenspiel restaurant
Profile: Midscale restaurant
In business: 16 years
Seats: 100
Meals served: Dinner

At least five restaurants have closed in the past year in the 6,000-person community of Higganum, Connecticut. **J. Andrew Engelhardt**, owner and chef of the Glockenspiel restaurant, attributes their demise to the economic downswing. His weapon against this adversary is longevity and his on-site management.

About 70 percent of Glockenspiel's customers are destination oriented because the restaurant is one of only six German establishments in Connecticut. Engelhardt says his interest in German cooking took hold during his training with a Swiss chef.

Engelhardt carries on the tradition of training new chefs by choosing cooks right out of culinary school. "You learn more when you are taken under someone's wing," he says. "Six of my past employees now own restaurants; that makes me feel good."

2 MID-ATLANTIC

Location: Fairview, PA
Association member: Robert Lindgren
Operation: The Green Shingle
Profile: Family-style operation
In business: 52 years
Seats: 125
Meals served: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

The Green Shingle restaurant is basically a truck stop, says manager **Raymond Hart**. Because of the steady stream of truckers and travelers, business has been "very good."

Hart offers diners daily and manager's specials. "We appeal to all types of people. The menu contains a variety of food," he says. Typically, there are eight or nine entrees from which diners select. Since truck drivers must eat a majority of their meals on the road, Hart says he tries to provide them with low-cholesterol selections, such as baked boneless chicken, as well as homestyle favorites like meatloaf.

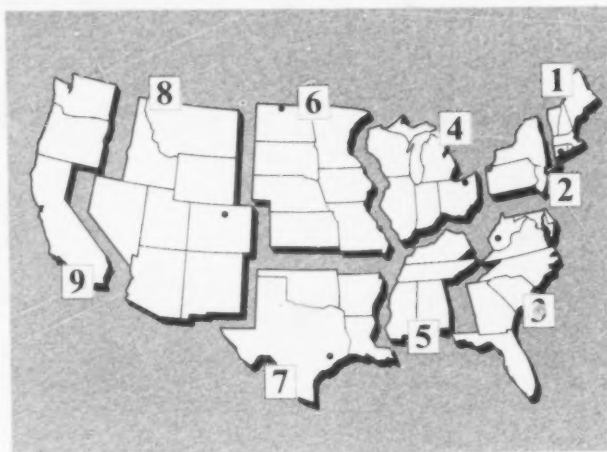
Another important consideration for travelers, notes Hart, is clean rest rooms. "We have the cleanest rest rooms around. I have a guy who works outside seven days a week—rain or shine—picking up trash and sweeping up," he says. "The owner believes that if a restaurant looks dirty on the outside, then people will figure it is dirty on the inside."

Hart advertises the restaurant through billboards and by supporting community activities, such as Little League baseball.

3 SOUTH ATLANTIC

Location: Charleston, WV
Association member: Zoe (Humphreys) Sarrett
Operation: Humphreys' Pine Room and Driftwood
Profile: Family-style restaurant
In business: 44 years
Seats: 100 in dining room, 600 in banquet room
Meals served: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

"We were serving baked steak and roast beef with



dressings before anyone even thought of Stove Top," says **Zoe Sarrett**, owner of Humphreys' Pine Room and Driftwood. She and her parents opened the business in 1944 as Humphreys' Dairy Bar. "It was right after the War, and things were different then. We served milk shakes, homemade ice cream and sundaes. And we had a jukebox."

Sarrett has added three dining rooms to the original operation, and she opens the banquet room on Sunday. "Our busiest day is Sunday, right after church," she says. Eighty percent of her customers are senior citizens, and she has discovered that one way to encourage them to eat in her restaurant is to put tablecloths on the tables.

Customers also enjoy the decor, with its pine tables, fireplaces and antiques. "We get bus tours. Sometimes they'll just come in to look around," says Sarrett.

4 EAST NORTH CENTRAL

Location: Chagrin Falls, OH
Association member: Edward Thomas
Operation: Hunter's Hollow Tavern
Profile: Upscale restaurant
In business: 13 years
Seats: 150

Meals served: Lunch, dinner

"During the last eight months, we've been in a big downswing. We are in a recession," says **Edward Thomas**, owner of Hunter's Hollow Tavern. Thomas' business has been fair, but he has noticed the change in the economy.

The mostly local clientele comes to the operation, which resembles an English hunt club, for its fresh seafood, veal Oscar and steaks. A combo plays music nightly.

Thomas says he plans to remain competitive by providing "good food, good service and by being here day and night." He also advertises in the local paper and occasionally on cable television. But primarily he relies on word-of-mouth recommendations.

5 EAST SOUTH CENTRAL

Location: Picayune, MS
Association member: Joan Clark
Operation: Hide-A-Way Lake Club
Profile: Country-club-style restaurant
In business: 21 years
Seats: 140
Meals served: Lunch, dinner on Saturday night

"We're doing a lot better than last year. The whole

area was depressed in 1989 because of the oil industry, but now it's taken an upturn," reports **Joan Clark**, manager of Hide-A-Way Lake Club, a members-only community operation. The club is located on 1,600 acres of land, which includes a 200-acre lake. There are more than 500 homes in the development, with some members coming to Picayune from New Orleans for a getaway weekend.

During the week, members enjoy buffet-style meals. Clark and her staff never deal with money; members use their in-house credit cards.

The club's biggest business comes from catering and banquets.

6 WEST NORTH CENTRAL

Location: Westhope, ND
Association member: Julie Cargo
Operation: Gateway Inn
Profile: Family-style restaurant
In business: 8 years
Seats: 60 in dining room, 80 banquet seats
Meals served: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

When the leaves start to turn and the hunting season begins, the Gateway Inn is very busy, says manager **Julie Cargo**. Located six miles from the Canadian border, the restaurant also draws in travelers to and from Canada.

"Years ago there was a hotel and restaurant on this spot, but it burned down. The community got together and raised the money to build this place," says Cargo. The inn is owned by Souris Valley Development Corporation, a community company.

The restaurant features

daily luncheon specials and a Sunday buffet. The average price of a dinner is \$6 to \$7. Saturday evening and Sunday afternoon are the busiest times—that's when members of the 650-person community come in for the homemade pastries, soups and steaks.

Cargo says finding help has been a problem. "My people work 30 to 40-hour weeks. No one is really part time," she says.

7 WEST SOUTH CENTRAL

Location: Houston, TX
Association member: Edd Hendee
Operation: Taste of Texas
Profile: Fine-dining restaurant
In business: 13 years
Seats: 230
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

The Taste of Texas restaurant was doing well even when the Houston economy was not, reports owner **Edd Hendee**, because "we worked hard and took care of our customers." The operation features certified Angus-beef steaks and prime rib in an open-air, ranch-style setting.

Hendee says his restaurant does not have much direct competition, although he doesn't "give a great deal of thought to the direct competition," preferring instead to concentrate on customers. He fosters a high level of service by training his staff, working "shoulder to shoulder" with them and sponsoring in-house contests.

Hendee says he has noticed a change in his customers' eating habits in recent years. "They are much more attuned to quality, and they aren't drinking," he says.

8 MOUNTAIN

Location: Greeley, CO
Association member: Rob Haimson
Operation: Potato Brumbaugh's
Profile: Upscale restaurant
In business: 9 years
Seats: 150
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

"While others are going out of business, we are increasing—not a great deal, but some," says **Rob Haimson**, owner of Potato Brumbaugh's restaurant.

The secret to his success "is staying within our realm of expertise and remaining consistent." Haimson also reads a lot, visits other restaurants to see what's on their menus and travels to get new ideas.

Because of the restaurant's name, "people at first thought it was one of those little baked-potato places, but we're not that at all," Haimson says. The restaurant was named for a character in James Michener's book *Centennial*. The story takes place in the area where the restaurant is located.

The restaurant features prime rib, steaks and seafood, but more than half of the orders are for prime rib. Haimson puts two specials on the menu every week. "Running specials gives us a chance to see how difficult it is to prepare the items in the kitchen and also allows us to see how customers respond to them," he says.

Unlike many other restaurateurs, Haimson reports that he has never had a labor problem. The two colleges in his community of 60,000 add 20,000 students to the labor pool. "I have never had any problems

getting help, and I've gotten good kids, too—not just warm bodies off the street," says Haimson.

9 PACIFIC

Location: Hermosa Beach, CA
Association member: John Bowler
Operation: Fat Face Fenner's Falloon
Profile: Midscale restaurant
In business: 15 years
Seats: 90
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

When **John Bowler** bought Fat Face Fenner's Falloon restaurant, he also inherited the name. "The original owners named the restaurant for Keith Fenner, who's about 6'2" and skinny as a rail. Fat Face became his nickname," chuckles Bowler.

The restaurant, located one block off the beach, features half-pound hamburgers with a choice of 20 toppings. "We're famous for our hamburgers; we've won awards for them. In these days of poker-chip burgers, real hamburgers look enormous to most people," explains Bowler. The menu also contains soups, salads and sandwiches.

Hermosa Beach has changed a lot in the 15 years Bowler has been in business. "It's gone more upscale with beach property being what it is. There are more two-income households," he says. Bowler competes with the many other beach-bar restaurants by staying with what works. "We've established our niche by becoming known for having the best hamburger, and we stick with that," he says.

—Jennifer Batty

COVER STORY CATERING ON THE MOVE

The catering industry is changing, as operators turn their attention toward new flavors and seasonings to please their more nutrition-conscious customers.

SPECIALS

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Those lobbying dollars you donate could mean an income tax deduction.



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Charles Delmar, author of *The Essential Cook*, talks about his book in an interview with **Restaurants USA**.

22 Nutrition slips into the catering world

Caterers spice up their menus with lighter, healthier fare.

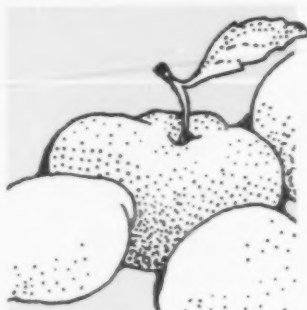
24 Fresh fruit vinaigrettes for the '90s

Salads perk up with the tangy taste of low-calorie fruit vinaigrettes.



15 Catering vans: to rent or to buy

Caterers all have their own recipes for success, but transportation is vital to every catering business. Here are some "truck tips" to keep in mind.



26 Herbs are here to stay

Herbs have found a permanent place in restaurant kitchens . . . and gardens.

29 Catering case study

A small restaurant chain lends its Mexican flair and family spirit to a national event—the opening of the Nixon Library and Birthplace.

34 The hospitality industry responds to the needs of the homeless

Restaurants USA continues its restaurants and the community series with this look at how operators are lending a helping hand to the homeless.

DEPARTMENTS

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- ☐ A "memorial" experience

Culinary Team USA gears up for competitions



Ready for public scrutiny. With their cameras rolling and pencils cocked, members of the press observed the 1992 Culinary Team USA in action for the first time in October. The team held a three-day practice session at the team's national headquarters, Walt Disney World Resort in Orlando, Florida. Next on the team's agenda is the Culinary World Cup to be held November 9 to 13, which will feature traditional American "everyday" food, such as braised short ribs and warm potato salad.

Chamber of Commerce. One business per state and the District of Columbia will be featured on "Nation's Business Today," seen daily on ESPN. From these 51 companies, a panel of national judges will select

three to represent America's small-business community at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce annual meeting in Washington DC in April 1991.

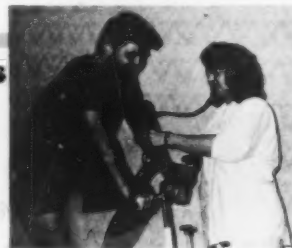
All entries must be received by January 31, 1991.

Health-awareness program for employees

McGuffey's Restaurants, Inc., headquartered in Asheville, North Carolina, is implementing a new health-awareness program to stimulate employees to be more health conscious.

The health-awareness program has started at the corporate and general-manager level and should include all managers next year. By 1992 all hourly employees will be included.

The program begins with a life survey and physical fitness and drug tests. An administrator then meets with each participant individually to discuss the results and set goals for the coming year.



McGuffey's believes the program is an important investment in its employees.

Gobble-Fest for the homeless

Thanksgiving should be a special day for the homeless, believes Alan Morstein, founder of Stuff 'n Turkey, a 16-unit chain of fast food restaurants based in Owings Mills, Maryland, that serves fresh-cooked turkey on home-baked bread. That is why Morstein is initiating Gobble-Fest.

Students ship cookies to classmates in Saudi Arabia

U.S. troops in Saudi Arabia will have a sweet holiday season, thanks to the Baltimore International Culinary College in Baltimore, Maryland. The college will donate 100 pounds of cookies to Operation Cookie, the operation airlifting home-baked cookies to U.S. troops in the Middle East.

"We have had at least three students called away from their studies to report to active duty in Saudi Arabia or to replace U.S.-based troops that have been sent to the the Middle East. Participating in Operation Cookie is one way our students can support their classmates and the thousands of troops in the Saudi Arabian desert," says Roger

Michael Brandson, vice president of human resources, takes the fitness test required of all McGuffey's Restaurants' general managers and corporate staff.

In the long run it may also lead to lower insurance premiums.

Both company-owned stores and franchises will be participating in this program within their local communities by providing local shelters with complete cooked Thanksgiving dinners with all the fixin's: fresh roasted turkey breast, mixed vegetables, stuffing, cranberry sauce, pumpkin pie, milk and canned sodas. Delivery will be made the day before Thanksgiving.

National search for exemplary small businesses

If your restaurant has successfully overcome adversity and could serve as a model for other small business owners nationwide, you may be a candidate for the Blue Chip Enterprise Award. The award is sponsored by the Connecticut Mutual Life Insurance Company and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

Participation in the program is easy. Simply call 1-800-AWARD 91 toll-free to request information and an application. Companies can also be nominated by outside vendors, suppliers, employees or customers. To be eligible your restaurant must employ between five and 300 people and have been in continuous operation for at least three years.

Unlike any other national program, the Blue Chip Enterprise Award will focus on how small businesses have faced challenges and managed critical resources to emerge stronger. Examples of these resources can include technology, marketing, finance, the community, quality assurance and human resources.

Case studies of award-winning companies will be compiled into a video-resource library and printed reference material and will be made available to the small-business community through local and state chambers of commerce around the country.

Panels of independent judges in each state will identify up to four "Blue Chip" businesses per state that will be recognized in *Nation's Business* magazine, published by the U.S.

Chylinski, CEC, CCE, college president.

Students in the college's evening program will bake part of the college's ship-

ment of cookies in class; student volunteers will have the use of college kitchens to complete the baking for the shipment.

Tips for shipping cookies to the Middle East

Do not send

□ Liquor or flavoring extracts that contain alcohol (i.e., vanilla)—illegal in Saudi Arabia

□ Butter or peanut butter—can become rancid in desert conditions

□ Bran, wheat germ, macadamia nuts—these have a high oil content and can become rancid

□ Chocolate chips, M&Ms, etc.—can melt in the desert heat

Do send

□ Chewy cookies, such

as oatmeal, raisin, sugar and spice cookies

□ Brownies made with cocoa powder

□ Pfeffernusse (European holiday cookie)

□ Gingerbread (made from a recipe using little or no molasses)

□ Cookies made with powdered sugar

□ Dried-fruit bars

Packaging pointer: Popcorn, unbuttered and unsalted, is an ideal packaging material. It's inexpensive, it cushions the cookies and it's an added treat for the troops.

—Natasha Shishkevish,
pastry instructor, Baltimore
International Culinary
College

FEEDBACK

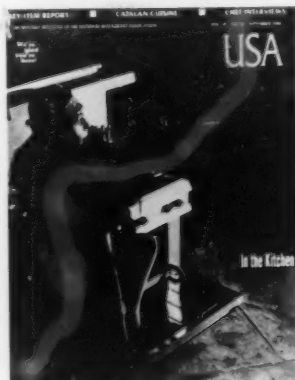
Dear Editor:

Your article on hiring chefs was excellent [September 1990]. Great info. Thank you for not making me come across as being pedantic.

—Marcel Desaulniers,
The Trellis Restaurant,
Williamsburg, Virginia

We're very excited about the article promoting designated drivers [September 1990]. The support of the National Restaurant Association has meant a lot to MADD. It's a real pleasure to work with such great people.

—Sally O'Connor,
Director of Community
Programs, Mothers
Against Drunk Driving



I am employed by The Village Tavern in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. I recently read an article titled "What's a Consultant?" in your June/July 1990 issue. ... Keep writing the great articles!

—Lee Witherow

FDA puts eggs on its "potentially hazardous" list

Restaurateurs should make some changes in the way they handle eggs to guard against potential contamination from Salmonella enteritidis.

After water, eggs may be the most frequently used food ingredient in a restaurant kitchen. Not only are eggs served directly, but they are also a common ingredient in other menu items—from baked goods to salad dressings. According to 1989 figures from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the American Egg Board, foodservice accounted for 1.5 billion pounds, or 14 trillion individual shell eggs—some 28 percent of the total U.S. production.

That's why a recent U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) interpretation of its model foodservice sanitation codes may have a sweeping effect on restaurants. As part of the effort to control foodborne illness caused by eggs contaminated with *Salmonella enteritidis* (*S.e.*), FDA has redefined shell eggs as a "potentially hazardous food," a regulatory term which means that eggs must meet time/temperature requirements for delivery and storage, cooking and holding before service.

Under the new FDA recommendation, state and local health agencies may soon be imposing these new requirements on restaurant operators:

□ Shell eggs must be received and stored under refrigeration (45°F or less).

□ Shell eggs must be cooked to an internal temperature of 140°F and held at that temperature if not served immediately.

□ Raw shell eggs may be prohibited for use in uncooked menu items such as Caesar salad and hollandaise or bearnaise sauces.

□ Shell eggs cannot be "pooled" or combined from different cartons in such items as french toast, Monte Cristo sandwich batter or scrambled eggs for buffet service—if the pooled product will be held before or after cooking.

Hepatitis guidelines for the health community



GUIDELINES FOR HANDLING HEPATITIS A IN THE FOODSERVICE

Developed by: The National Restaurant Association, Food Service Sanitation Inspection System, National Environmental Health Association, August, 1990

Combating overzealous regulatory publicity. The technical services department of the National Restaurant Association was instrumental in forming the committee that produced these guidelines for handling hepatitis A outbreaks. To increase credibility with regulators, the booklet was distributed by the National Environmental Health Association. Response to the publication has been positive.

Why these new restrictions?

Beginning in the early 1980s, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) noticed an increased incidence of *S.e.* outbreaks. Symptoms usually include abdominal cramps, fever, headache, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea. Although the illness is usually of fairly short duration, it may be particularly virulent for the very young, the elderly and persons al-

ready weakened by other serious illnesses or for those whose immune system is weakened.

CDC noted that *S.e.* infections seemed to be concentrated in the New England and Central Atlantic regions; other areas have reported increased outbreaks, but the incidence is less concentrated. Most outbreaks associated with eggs appear to be related to pooling of eggs, time/tem-

perature abuse and consumption of raw or incompletely cooked eggs.

From January 1985 through October 1989, *S.e.* caused 6,604 illnesses and 43 deaths. CDC studies implicated eggs as the likely source in 73 percent of the cases where food was identified. Examples include Caesar salad; some hollandaise or bearnaise sauces; noncommercial mayonnaise, eggnog or ice cream;

and dishes where eggs are often pooled or combined, such as scrambled eggs, omelets, french toast, Monte Cristo sandwiches, mousses and meringues.

What operators can do

Foodservice operators should re-examine their procedures for storage, handling and preparation of eggs to reduce the risk of *S.e.* infection. Some mea-

A historic change

Historically, Grade A shell eggs have had a good safety record. Disease problems associated with eggs in the past have usually been caused by fecal contamination of unwashed, unsanitary, nonGrade A eggs. Implementation of the Eggs Products Inspection Act of 1970 by USDA and improvements in handling and processing by the egg industry led FDA in 1973 to exempt fresh, clean, uncracked, odor-free shell eggs from time/temperature controls in its various model codes.

However, the recent involvement of shell eggs in *S.e.* outbreaks has forced a change in that view, because it now appears that this organism is *inside* the

shells and membranes of those clean, uncracked, Grade A eggs that were once thought to be inviolable.

S.e. in laying flocks presents a "good news/bad news" situation. First, the good news: *S.e.* does *not* cause clinical illness in chickens, nor does it affect chicken meat. (The recent outbreaks in Great Britain that *did* affect chicken meat involve a different strain of *S.e.* not yet found in this country.) The bad news is that infected hens are difficult to identify, and control efforts focused on eliminating *S.e.* from breeder and layer flocks may have to work backwards, tracing contaminated eggs that are first associated with disease outbreaks. It appears that the proportion of eggs contaminated with *S.e.* is rela-

tively small, but, like the infected chickens that lay them, there is no way to identify *which* egg might be contaminated; that's why it is so important to avoid "pooling," which spreads the contamination in large volume preparations. (Note: Utensils such as mixing bowls or whisks can be a source of inadvertent "pooling" contamination, if used over a period of time between successive batches of eggs. Utensils should be washed, rinsed and sanitized frequently.)

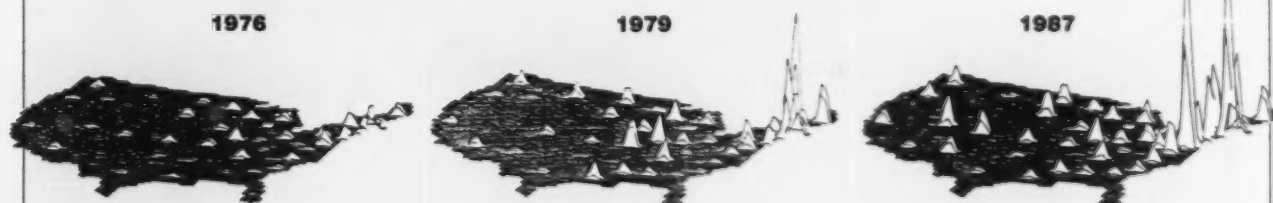
USDA, FDA and the egg-production industry are all actively involved in searching for more effective controls at the production level of the egg market. When an "infected flock" is identified, eggs are diverted from the table-egg market and sent to egg-breaking plants for pasteurization; or the

flock owner may elect to sacrifice the infected flock. FDA is developing other proposals for the control of eggs, in the event that current flock-identification procedures do not prove to be effective in stemming outbreaks of *S.e.* Some areas being considered include: sampling poultry feed and ingredients to determine if *S.e.* contamination is present, requiring additional labeling of egg cartons, requiring certification of flocks as being *S.e.*-free, and requiring refrigeration of eggs during storage and transportation.

For foodservice operators, all of this means that "the rules have changed" indeed and that they, in turn, must make changes in the ways that they receive, store, handle, cook and serve eggs to their customers.

Salmonella enteritidis

Number of reported isolates per 100,000 population



The outbreak of *Salmonella enteritidis* is concentrated in—but not limited to—the Northeast.

sures that can be taken include:

- Requesting refrigerated delivery of eggs and storing those eggs at 45°F or less

- Minimizing storage time

- Avoiding "pooling" of eggs

- Substituting commercially pasteurized eggs or egg products in such items as french-toast batter, mousses and scrambled eggs

- Not using raw eggs in menu items that will not be thoroughly cooked. Commercially pasteurized eggs or egg products can be substituted for raw eggs in such items as Caesar salad

- Cooking eggs or menu items containing eggs to 140°F. (At this temperature the white is firmly set and coagulated; the yolk is "beginning to thicken—it is not runny, but not hard.")

The regulatory prognosis

Although the FDA Interpretation does not have the immediate force of law for individual foodservice operations, many regulatory jurisdictions will adopt FDA's Interpretation fairly quickly. The first states to do so will probably be in the Northeast and Central Atlantic regions, where the number of *S.e.* outbreaks has been the greatest. But other states may begin various degrees of selective enforcement out of a sense of caution. Some jurisdictions have considered requiring a menu-warning statement to advise customers of the problem, so that they can make an informed choice. Check with your local health department to be sure what the specific requirement will be in your area.

—Robert E. Harrington

Restaurateurs champion dolphin-safe tuna

Forget just a day for dolphins—1990 may be the year of the dolphin, at least as far as the tuna industry and some restaurateurs are concerned.

More than 100,000 dolphins perish annually, entangled in the nets of tuna fishermen in the Eastern Tropical Pacific (a coastal area that runs from Chile to Southern California). Trapped beneath the surface, these mammals (who need oxygen to breathe) drown en masse, as hunters search for popular yellowfin tuna that, for a reason that biologists have not been able to completely explain, swim below the dolphins.

Although dolphin mortality has dropped significantly in the 18 years since the passage of the Marine Mammal Protection Act in 1972, the numbers are still high. But things are beginning to change.

Last April, after growing pressure from environmental groups, legislators, and concerned citizens (including school children), the three largest U.S. sellers of canned tuna—Starkist, Bumble Bee and Chicken of the Sea—announced that they would no longer purchase or sell tuna caught by methods harmful to dolphins. "We don't make any exceptions," says Erik Bloemendaal, general manager of quality and communication for Starkist. "Tuna must be dolphin-safe before we buy it. We will accept no fish that is not categorically dolphin-safe."

Through the broad network of independent brokers and distributors, some of this tuna ends up on res-

taurant and institution shelves. Hence, many restaurateurs may already be contributing indirectly, and perhaps unknowingly, to dolphin safety. Some operators, however, are taking a more direct and active role in the tuna/dolphin issue.

Blimpie takes an active role

Anthony Conza, president and co-founder of Blimpie, one of the nation's top sub-

Conza believes that the pro-dolphin stance will triumph in the end. "We believe that customers will support us more if we adopt an environmentally responsible position," he says.



Anthony Conza, president and co-founder of Blimpie, was instrumental in the development of his chain's "Save the Dolphins" promotional program.

marine sandwich chains, has made such an effort. The small chain, owned by the Astor Restaurant Group and based in New York City, boasts only 380 units nationwide (primarily on the East Coast), but it took a big step for the dolphins when it decided that only dolphin-safe tuna would appear in its stores.

The decision was mainly a result of Conza's personal involvement. Long before the explosion of press coverage surrounding the commercial canneries' policy change, he became aware of the dolphins' plight and was moved to action. "When the tuna/dolphin issue was brought to our attention, we immediately began working on a solution," he says.

After further research, including working with environmental groups, such as the Dolphin Research Center in Marathon Shores, Florida, Conza created the "Save the Dolphins" program and laid down Blimpie's "dolphin-safe" law: No store will purchase any tuna that is not dolphin safe, nor will it serve any yellowfin tuna.

The transition was not particularly easy for Conza and his chain. It took a great deal of time and hard work to find a distributor that would guarantee the "safeness" of the product at, of course, a higher cost. In addition, "safe" Skip Jack tuna, which the restaurants now serve, is slightly darker in color than the previous store brand. Conza feared the color change might hurt sales. So far, however, sales are still strong, and the chain has decided to absorb the minor expense in order to promote this important cause.

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Now that he has ensured the quality of his tuna, Conza concentrates on educating his customers. Blimpie stores display "Save the Dolphins" certificates proclaiming them an "authorized store," and Conza encourages consumers and other restaurants to get involved.

Customers catalyze Unicorn Village

At Unicorn Village in North Miami Beach, Florida, it was the customers who provided the impetus for change. "They alerted us to the problem," says Jerry Walper, manager of the 300-seat midscale restaurant.

The 11-year-old establishment—which includes a 14,000-square-foot natural foods market—has always been concerned with environmental issues. No smoking is allowed on the premises, water is purified and organically grown food is used whenever possible; but the tuna/dolphin issue didn't come to light until several years ago. "We didn't even understand the issue until the early 1980s,"

says Walper, "but more and more customers began taking a stance on it, and that's when we made the change." And, like Blimpie, Unicorn Village was well ahead of the commercial canneries. Dolphin-safe tuna first appeared on the shelves of the gourmet market almost eight years ago.

Now, all canned tuna served at Unicorn Village is guaranteed dolphin-safe Tongol tuna, which is caught in the Gulf of Siam without harm to marine life. Fresh tuna is line-caught as well, and all tuna dishes are marked on the menu with a dolphin emblem.

"We go through a lot of tuna here," says Walper, "but with our clientele there is simply no other option. Even if only 1 or 2 percent of our customers feel strongly about the issue, that 1 or 2 percent is very important to us. We'll make the extra effort. Besides, this is more than a business venture for us."

Still a long way to go

Protecting the dolphins, and other marine life, has become more than a business venture for many, but there is still a long way to go toward the goal of no dolphin deaths and no dolphin injury. "Zero tolerance is the only acceptable way," says Bloemendaal.

—Melanie A. Crosby

How you can get involved

There are many ways for restaurateurs to get involved.

You can track down the source of your tuna and the methods used to catch it. You can advertise your dolphin-safe stance by using in-house displays, such as wall plaques and window decals or menu ad-

vertisements, and by developing a promotional campaign such as Conza's "Save the Dolphins" program. You can also heighten customer awareness by promoting environmental groups' pursuits, such as Greenpeace's "Save the Dolphins" crusade.

Every step, no matter how small, is an important step in this worthwhile cause.

Fall Board meeting report

The National Restaurant Association's board of directors gathered in Washington DC last month for its annual fall meeting. The following reports and resolutions came out of the meeting:

The **government affairs** committee determined that the five most important issues before Congress are FICA tax repeal, the Civil Rights Act, the business-meal-deduction issue, child-labor legislation and the small-business minimum-wage exemption. In order to influence lawmakers on these issues, the committee mapped out a strategy that combines direct lobbying, grassroots mobilization and PAC contributions.

The **state relations** committee reported 83 grassroots meetings between Key Contacts and their congressional representatives since May. The committee called for an increase in such meetings and for a renewed focus on making current Key Contacts more active.

The **political action** committee designated \$166,950 to 66 candidates—five Democrats and 61 Republicans. During the board meeting, the committee hosted a fundraising dinner for the Bill Zeff-for-Congress campaign; Zeff, a restaurateur, is the Republican nominee for New Hampshire's 1st congressional district.

The committee also announced that NRA-PAC has achieved 60 percent of its fundraising goals for this election cycle.

The **membership** committee approved extension of Oregon and South Caro-

lina's dual-membership agreement for two years. On January 1, 1991, Indiana will become a dual membership state, bringing the total number of states with joint/dual agreements to 20.

The **communications** committee reported on the progress of the association's "We're glad you're here!" campaign. Information on the campaign has been mailed to 38,000 operators, and the campaign has been publicized in the trade press, on CNN and in the *New York Times*.

The committee also considered a variety of projects to commemorate the association's 75th anniversary, to begin during the fall of

"Celebration of Education" begins with counselors



THE WESTON HOTEL CYPRESS CREEK
FORT LAUDERDALE

Through a spirited talk and video presentation, NRA President Michael Hurst communicated his enthusiasm for the foodservice industry and the opportunities it offers to the 240 counselors who attended the annual conference of the Occupational Specialists and Guidance Counselors Association. If the counselors communicate the same message to their students, word of foodservice career opportunities can potentially reach thousands of high school students.

POLITICS ON OUR MENU



Keynote speaker Jim Miller, former director of the Office of Management and Budget, spoke to foodservice operators on a variety of subjects, including the federal budget system and business-meal deductibility.



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The 1990 Public Affairs Conference included productive meetings between operators and legislators, such as this roundtable discussion between Rep. Hank Brown (R-CO) and Colorado restaurateurs.



A record 262 members of Congress attended the eighth annual *Chef d'oeuvre* reception, which was catered by eight of Washington DC's finest restaurants. Here, NRA Director Belrne Brown of Cuisine Management, Inc., Rep. Bill Grant (R-FL), Rep. Cliff Stearns (R-FL), Sen. Connie Mack (R-FL) and Rick Walsh, vice president of government relations for General Mills Restaurants, enjoy some friendly conversation.

ple at her restaurant, The Stone Hearth, in Elizabethtown, Kentucky. "The conference gave me a whole different insight into the way government works."

Republican Whip Newt Gingrich (R-GA) commended restaurateurs at the conference for their lobbying efforts, noting that "the business community is never going to get the re-

spect it deserves on Capitol Hill until it demands it!"

Insights into government

1990 Public Affairs Conference Chairman Bruce C. Cotton, senior vice president of Jerrico, Inc., in Lexington, Kentucky, introduced conferees to a variety of speakers who shared behind-the-scenes looks at foodservice issues:

Operators champion foodservice perspective at 1990 Public Affairs Conference

Foodservice operators from 42 states marched into Washington DC on September 24 to 26 to impress upon legislators and regulators the importance of foodservice issues.

Successful lobbying blitz

The 412 restaurateurs who attended the National Restaurant Association's sixth annual Public Affairs Conference visited 388 of the 535 Senate and House offices in an intense September 25 lobbying blitz. Operators zeroed in on gaining support for repealing the FICA tax on tips, softening the Civil Rights Act of 1990, correcting the minimum-wage small-business exemption, rebuffing stricter teen employment laws and preserving business-meal deductibility.

The overwhelming grassroots lobbying pressure convinced at least 38 members of Congress to pledge their support for H.R. 446 and S. 1815—bills to repeal the 1987 law requiring operators to pay FICA taxes on all tips their employees report. Conferees also obtained several commitments from senators and representatives to uphold President Bush's likely veto of the Civil Rights Act of 1990.

"It's really great to feel you can make a difference on a national level," said conference attendee Martha Pride, who employs 50 peo-

1993 and to climax at the 1994 convention in Chicago. Projects under consideration include videos, coffee-table books, media packets, charitable activities and events to promote the industry and the association.

The **Projects With Industry (PWI)** program, designed to match disabled workers with foodservice careers, continues to expand. A survey of 150 leading chains shows efforts are being made to attract workers with disabilities. The PWI committee announced that a foodservice careers booklet and videotape will soon be available.

The **research** committee announced that a survey of wages for salaried employees will soon complement the survey of wages for hourly employees.

The **technical services** committee reported that, as a result of association testimony before the Senate's Small Business Committee, the Occupational Safety and Hazard Administration (OSHA) is reevaluating the Hazard Communications Standard that required employers to specially train workers who use any chemicals deemed hazardous. The committee also announced the upcoming inaugural meeting of the Multi-Unit Environmental Affairs Officers' Executive Study Group.

According to the **convention** committee, only one percent of exhibitors surveyed at the 1990 Show reported they would not return in 1991. Also, the committee reported a new alliance with the Hotel-Motel Association of Illinois in order to secure new lodging-oriented exhibitors and to increase hotelier attendance at the Show.



More than 400 restaurateurs from 42 states attended the sixth annual Public Affairs Conference to meet with legislators and promote foodservice interests.

DC ROUNDUP

□ *Budget bill likely to affect foodservice.* As Congress put the finishing touches on a budget for the current fiscal year, restaurateurs began girding for likely increases in federal alcohol excise taxes—one item Congress was almost certain to include as a revenue-raiser in the FY 1991 budget.

As this issue of **Restaurants USA** went to press, the National Restaurant Association was hopeful that Congress would also pass at least a one-year extension of both the Targeted Jobs Tax Credit (TJTC) and the 25 percent tax deduction that the self-employed can take for health-insurance costs. Both tax breaks expired September 30, 1990.

The association was waging a fierce battle at the end of last month to get Congress to reject a House plan that would raise revenues by assessing higher penalties against employers accused of violating teen labor laws. The plan, a last-minute addition to the House budget bill that was not included in the Senate version, would raise maximum child-labor penalties from the current level of \$1,000 to \$10,000.

□ *Federal advisory organization recommends restaurant labeling.* The National Restaurant Association has gone on

the offensive to protest the September 26, 1990, recommendation of the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) that "limited-menu" restaurants be required to disclose nutrition information either on food labels or by some other means at the point of sale.

The restaurant provisions, part of a comprehensive report on nutrition labeling commissioned by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), also include a recommendation that all full-service restaurants be required to provide detailed nutrient analyses for standard menu items upon request.

Calling the NAS suggestions "preposterous" and pointing out that Congress exempts restaurants from two pending labeling bills, association president Michael Hurst has asked FDA and USDA to reject NAS's recommendations as impractical, unnecessary and unenforceable. FDA and USDA have not yet said how they plan to proceed.

□ *Association-opposed civil rights bill vetoed by President.* The Civil Rights Act of 1990, landmark legislation making it easier for plaintiffs in job bias cases to prove discrimination and collect large damage

awards from their employers, was vetoed by President Bush on October 22, 1990. Two days later the Senate fell one vote short of the majority needed to override the veto.

The President feared that the legislation would encourage litigation and could force employers to adopt hiring quotas in order to head off lawsuits. However, the legislation is likely to be reintroduced soon after the 102nd Congress reconvenes in January.

□ *President signs bill authorizing small-business conference.* President Bush signed a bill last month that gives the green light to the federal government to begin planning a White House Small Business Conference for as early as 1994.

Small-business owners attending state conferences in 1992 and 1993 will be chosen as delegates to the national conference.

Similar White House conferences in 1980 and 1986 were instrumental in helping to steer Congress away from legislation that would have had an adverse effect on small businesses. Delegates at each of the previous conferences drew up 60-point lists of legislative priorities that members of Congress still turn to when they want to know how small businesses feel about an issue.

—Denise Roach

□ *The budget:* Jim Miller, former director of the Office of Management and Budget, told operators about the nuances of the federal budget system and warned the crowd to stay on guard to protect business-meal deductibility from further deductions—an "easy hit" in budget talks, according to Miller.

□ *Mandated benefits:* Reps. George Miller (D-CA) and Vin Weber (R-MN) locked horns in a heated debate over mandated family and medical leave. Miller claimed that mandated leave was necessary to protect employees from inflexible employer policies. Weber countered that Congress should not mandate benefits that would "force businesspeople to cut costs."

□ *Teen employment:* Restaurateurs criticized Deputy Secretary of the Department of Labor (DOL) Rod DeArment for DOL's support for tougher teen-employment laws. Facing vocal complaints from operators, DeArment denied that DOL had unfairly targeted restaurants during its recent crackdown on employers who hire teenagers illegally.

□ *Education:* David Gergen, editor-at-large for *U.S. News and World Report*, praised the audience for the great strides restaurant owners have made in educating American youth. Comparing foodservice successes in training young adults to work with the federal government's inability to "seize control of our nation's destiny," Gergen challenged operators to volunteer to lead their communities in building a stronger U.S. educational system.

—Andrew McLaughlin

IT PAYS TO BE CLEAR ABOUT TAX-DEDUCTIBLE LOBBYING



by Mark E. Battersby

from those who will bear the brunt of those new taxes. Fortunately, tucked away in the massive federal tax laws is a little-used provision that permits a tax deduction for certain foodservice operations that lobby to have those parking meters removed, those tax laws repealed or changed or those local ordinances modified.

Two categories of tax-deductible lobbying

Specifically, under the present tax rules, an income tax deduction is allowed for most of the expenses that are related to appearances before and communications with any legislative body, legislative committee or even individual legislator. According to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) the two categories of tax-deductible lobbying expenses are:

(1) expenses incurred in direct connection with making appearances, submitting statements or sending communications and

(2) expenses incurred in direct connection with the communication of information between an individual taxpayer and an organization—of which he or she is a member—with respect to legislation or proposed legislation of direct interest to the taxpayer.

Naturally, to the extent that membership dues in any organization are used to fund either of the above categories, they, too, are tax deductible. But a prime requirement for a legitimate tax deduction is that the legislation or proposed legislation being lobbied for or against must be of “di-

rect interest” to the person claiming the tax deduction. To be deductible, the lobbying expenses incurred must also satisfy the more general ordinary and necessary standard applicable to business deductions.

Legislation or proposed legislation is considered to be of direct interest to any foodservice operation if it is of such a nature that it may reasonably be expected to affect the operator’s business—whether that effect will be beneficial or detrimental or whether it will be immediate or long term.

Obviously, legislation or proposed legislation is not of direct interest to the foodservice operation merely because it may affect business in general. Of course, if the legislation or proposed legislation affects the restaurateur’s business, it is of direct interest even though it may also affect other taxpayers or businesses in general. On a somewhat more technical note, not all of the provisions of the legislation or proposed legislation need to affect the foodservice operation; one provision within the bill or plan will be enough to qualify the lobbying expense as an income tax deduction.

Meeting the direct-interest test

Legislation or proposed legislation that would meet the direct-interest test is that which would either increase or decrease the taxes that apply to the business, increase or decrease the general operating costs or increase or decrease the administrative burdens connected with the running of the operation. Naturally, there are many more possibilities, but

The average foodservice operator has good reason to feel helpless when facing law changes over which he or she does not seem to have a say. On the local level this feeling of being powerless is best illustrated by the

restaurant owner who supports the campaign of a local official only to have that individual press to have parking meters installed in front of the owner’s place of business after being elected.

Somewhat akin to the tickets that result from the local politician’s idea to install parking meters are the tax laws that continually emerge from Washington DC and the many state capitals with, apparently, little input

these should give the average restaurant owner an idea of what is and is not of direct interest to his or her particular operation.

In reality, it is the rare foodservice operator who has either the time or the patience to separate routine correspondence costs into the everyday tax-deductible business expenses and those that are related to lobbying. The cost of an appearance or the preparation of extensive background reports and data is a little easier to keep separate. For the most part, however, most lobbying expenses remain tucked away in the books and financial statements of the foodservice operation—at least until an IRS audit. Thus, it is important to know just what the IRS will accept as a lobbying expense—and what it won't—whether it is clearly marked on the income tax return or tucked away where only an accountant (or IRS auditor) can find it.

For instance, the lobbying-expense deduction rules contain two limitations: (1) no tax deduction is permitted for any amount paid or incurred for participating or intervening in any political campaign, and (2) no deduction is allowed for expenditures to influence the general public with respect to any legislation—if the written or verbal statements pertain to action by a legislative body; reflect a view on legislative action, either explicitly or implicitly; and are distributed to reach individuals as voters. Thus, amounts paid by a restaurant owner to local committee or groups to support or oppose state and local initiatives are not tax deductible, because the expenses are usually made in an attempt to influence the vote of the general public.

Under the existing tax laws it is permissible to attempt to swing the opinions of lawmakers, legislative bodies and even committees. But bringing pressure to bear by attempting to rally the public for or against a proposal—no matter how it will affect the foodservice operator's business—is not tax deductible. Similarly, contributions to an organization, or at least the portion used to attempt to influence the general public about legislation or proposed legislation, cannot be deducted.

In general, dues or contributions to political action campaigns (PACs) will not be deductible because those organizations are typically organized for campaigning. Occasionally, a PAC may concern itself with legislation. Dues or contributions made to such a PAC are tax-deductible business expenses only to the extent that they are attributable to neither the organization's attempts to influence legislation by urging the public to contact legislators nor to any campaigning.

Sample rulings

One IRS ruling denied a tax deduction for amounts spent by a foodservice corporation for printing and distributing to suppliers, customers and shareholders the text of its president's remarks before the state legislature in opposition to an environmental-protection bill. Similarly, costs incurred by a restaurant corporation in preparing and placing advertisements in major state newspapers and regional magazines setting forth objections to proposed bills were not deductible business expenses.

Two other IRS rulings focus on the question of whether certain actions constitute the forbidden "grassroots" lobbying. One tax-exempt trade organization encouraged its members to contact their employees and suppliers to have them, in turn, communicate with certain elected representatives to support repeal of legislation considered detrimental to the association. The organization was found to be engaging in "grassroots" lobbying because it went beyond its membership to urge the public to take action. Therefore, the lobbying expenses it incurred could not be deducted.

Conversely, a tax-exempt trade association was found not to be engaging in so-called "grassroots" lobbying when it urged its members to write or call their members of Congress to recommend that they support legislation of direct interest to the association. However, when such communications are directed at prospective members, such action is considered "grassroots" lobbying.

It goes without saying that in today's furor over ethics, neither direct nor indirect contributions made to political candidates or parties are tax

deductible as business expenses. However, if contributions are made to a committee organized to bring a national political convention to the locality in which the restaurant or foodservice operation conducts business, those expenses are deductible—provided, of course, that they are made with a reasonable expectation of a commensurate financial return.

Regardless of the restaurateur's views on or use of advertising, no income tax deduction is allowed for amounts paid for advertising in the convention programs of a political party—no matter who publishes the program or who, ultimately, receives the advertising revenues.

That ban on tax deductions for indirect political contributions extends to advertising in publications other than political convention programs if any part of the proceeds directly or indirectly aids a political party or candidate. This same rule also bans deductions for amounts paid for admissions to any dinner or program if any part of the proceeds from the event directly or indirectly inures to, or for, the use of a political party or political candidate. Admission costs include any separate charge for food or drink. What's worse, this prohibition extends to other events such as galas, dances, theatrical or film presentations, cocktail parties, picnics, sporting events or similar affairs.

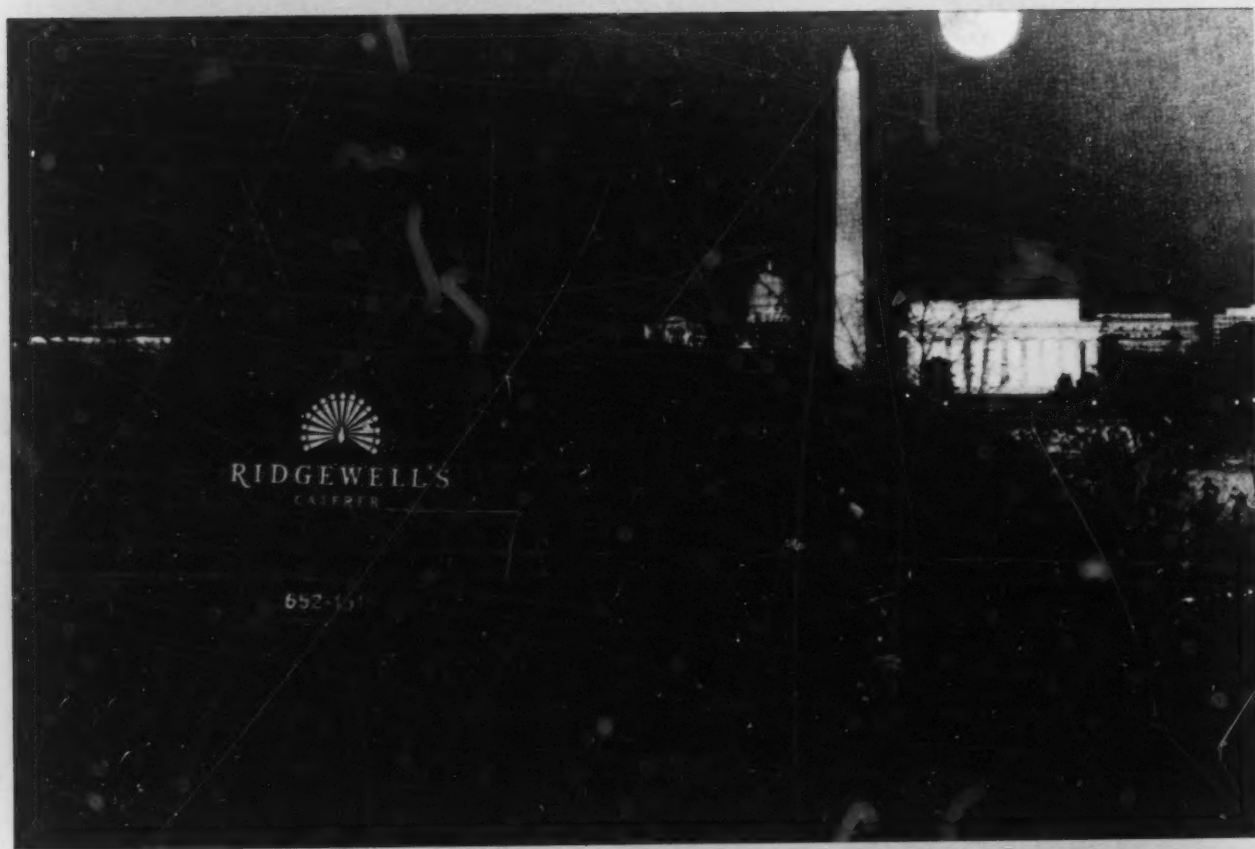
On the surface it might not appear to be worthwhile to separate routine lobbying expenses that would otherwise be written off as the normal costs of doing business. However, the IRS is becoming more and more demanding that deductions be itemized and broken down. Thus, entire deductions have been lost because too many "miscellaneous" expenses were included or too many personal or nondeductible expenses were tucked away with legitimate write-offs.

Staying within the permissible framework of the lobbying expense deduction rules will ensure that a tax write-off is available for those expenses. □

Mark E. Battersby is a tax and financial adviser, lecturer and writer with offices in Ardmore, Pennsylvania.

Trucks are part of a caterer's routine. They move food, tables, chairs, tablecloths, china, silverware flowers and party supplies to a party location. If items are not transported on time, or refrigeration fails, a caterer does not often get a second chance to win a client back. But trucks are not cheap. A new, refrigerated catering truck can range from \$25,000 to well over \$50,000, depending on its size and features. This is a substantial investment, and many caterers wonder if they should buy or rent.

CATERING VANS



TO RENT OR TO BUY

To rent

To avoid such a large capital expenditure, some caterers use rental vehicles, relying on their own car or small fleet of cars and vans for all events, except those that are far away or large. "For the last six years, we've

had only have one truck, a cube van with an attic," says George Pfeil, general manager of Remus Catering in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Although the company is one of the largest caterers in that city (averaging one function a day), it owns only one dry truck. "We rent trucks every day,"

says Pfeil. (The company has found that the cost of the vehicle plus insurance and upkeep far outweighs the cost of rental.)

"Renting is a good option for us," says Pfeil. "Depending on the number of functions and what is required at each function, we determine the type of trucks we need to rent. However, if the cost of renting outweighs what you determine you will spend on purchasing a truck and maintaining it, then lease or buy!" Pfeil says the average rental cost is \$75 per day plus an hourly fee for refrigeration and a fee for mileage.

When renting a truck is necessary, some successful small caterers have been able to pass along the cost of the rental to customers.

To buy

Caterers who believe in owning their own trucks cite availability—guaranteed access to refrigerated trucks when they need them—as the chief reason. One of the hardest things to rent in July, they quip, is a refrigerated truck. "Every caterer has his or her own operational needs, but we decided on ownership," says Chung Kim, vice president of purchasing for Ridgewell's Caterers in Bethesda, Maryland, the largest caterer in the nation's capital. Today, Ridgewell's fleet of trucks numbers approximately 40, about half of which are refrigerated. Ridgewell's trucks vary in size, but about 60 percent of its fleet consists of 18 to 20-foot trucks, and 40 percent consists of 12 to 16-foot trucks. The company also uses several mini-vans.

Most of these vehicles are customized. "With the amount of business we do in downtown Washington DC—where we have parking problems, different size loading docks and narrow alleys—we need narrow, short-body trucks that can easily maneuver in and out of alleys. Because our food and service requirements must usually be completed in two hours, we have to rely on smaller vehicles that can get around other larger trucks already situated at a loading dock or crowded into an alley or back parking area."

Balous Miller, president of Bill

Miller Bar-B-Q in San Antonio, Texas, is another caterer who believes in owning his own trucks because of his special equipment.

Miller's fleet includes 20 vehicles, four of which are refrigerated. Thirteen of the 16 nonrefrigerated trucks are large, lift-gate vehicles, and three are passenger vans that can seat from eight to 12 people.

"All of my refrigerated trucks are customized in order to be a combination refrigeration/dry truck," explains Miller. "The trucks have a moveable bulkhead that allows us to vary the amount of refrigerated space. This is really important to us, since we may be going 300 miles to cater a party. We may want to store food items, such as raw fish, potato salad, coleslaw and meat in the refrigerated section, and put supplies, such as paper plates, napkins, bread, desserts, pies, cookies and beans, in the nonrefrigerated section."

Operators also believe that having their own refrigerated vehicle provides a greater margin of safety. Allan Elias, owner of Allan Elias Custom Catering in Minneapolis, Minnesota, has owned his own truck since starting his catering business 16 years ago. "I started with a refrigerated truck and have always owned my own trucks," explains Elias. Today, Elias owns nine vehicles—one power-lift dry truck, two refrigerated trucks, two mini-vans and four station wagons. "I feel owning is important, especially refrigerated trucks, to prevent foodborne illness. I like to have a little extra assurance and a built-in safety system." Elias uses refrigerated trucks to carry foods to events.

What to look for in a truck

Caterers agree that reliability and flexibility are key elements in purchasing a catering truck. Most importantly, caterers recommend identifying a specific list of their needs before buying.

□ The "dry" truck.

Most caterers opt for a "dry" truck, a multi-purpose, nonrefrigerated truck, to be the workhorse of their operations. Most say that these trucks can handle the range of catering needs, especially since today's holding containers, which can be adapted to cre-

ate a refrigerator-like environment, can usually transport food safely to an event.

Here's what operators recommend looking for in these workhorses:

**The chassis.* The most important feature of a chassis is its reliability. "I want trucks that are easy to maintain and ones where the parts for repair are easily accessible," explains Kim of Ridgewell's. "Also, I want a truck that has a 10-year life. In the past, we had problems with service. Some of our trucks were in the dealer's shop for two weeks waiting for parts."

**Size.* Make sure the truck box is not longer than 20 to 22 feet. Larger trucks become difficult to drive and cannot easily turn at corners.

**Dual wheels in the back.* The dual wheels offer more stability and also allow for a heavier payload.

**Attic above the cab.* Operators note that small items can be packed efficiently in this otherwise lost space.

**A large, open, uninterrupted space.* Avoid trucks with wheel wells that cut into the cubic space available. A multipurpose open space is very useful for loading tables and other equipment. Some caterers even use the empty space in the truck as an on-site work area.

**Slotted, aluminum floor.* "A slotted, aluminum floor provides traction. I am very concerned about employee safety," explains Miller. "The truck floor gets wet during a party and I do

"I want trucks that are easy to maintain and ones where the parts for repair are easily accessible," explains Chung Kim of Ridgewell's.

not want an employee to fall. A floor with a system of ruts or slots really cuts down on injuries." The flooring should be removable for easy cleaning.

***Location of the doors.** Side doors can be handy for unloading items packed in the front of the truck before the back is unloaded.

***Lift gate.** This elevator-like device allows items to be moved from the truck to the ground with less employee lifting.

***Lighting.** A truck should be well lit; and if possible, there should be a switch by the exit door.

***Bumpers.** It may be a good idea to consider heavy-duty bumpers to prevent body damage to the truck.

***Extra-strength covers for outside corners of truck.** These extra-strength covers can help prevent damage from trees in older residential neighborhoods.

***Ability to secure items inside a less-than-full truck.** Devices known as spring-loaded pogo sticks can fit across the inside of the truck at intervals to hold cargo securely in place.

***Truck lining.** An extra metal layer of truck lining, or skin, inside the truck keeps items from bashing through the truck's outside layer. It also improves cleanability.

***Panel trucks and passenger vans.** Panel trucks or passenger vans with removable seats can often do double duty—carrying a crew of workers to a

site, or if the equipment needs are great, the vehicles can be used without the seats to carry supplies.

□ Refrigeration options.

After purchasing the truck chassis, caterers work with a local customized refrigeration or fabrication company to put a refrigerated box on the truck chassis.

There are three basic types of refrigerated options:

1. **A self-contained refrigeration unit with its own built-in generator.** This type of unit can operate without auxiliary power, but it is sometimes equipped for auxiliary, stand-by needs, which allows it to be plugged into a local power source.

2. **Stand-by.** A stand-by refrigeration unit is designed to be plugged into either a 110-volt or 220-volt power source. Some versions of this type of refrigeration unit can run off a truck's motor, just like air conditioning. These units work well in vans and vehicles up to one ton.

3. **Plug-in cold-plate units.** A plug-in cold-plate unit is a freezer coil that is installed within the unit and keeps food cold for 12 to 24 hours. These units are positioned on the top of the inside of the truck, allowing the cold air to fall. However, they are virtually worthless in situations where doors are repeatedly opened and closed.

Prices vary, and operators note they do not always need all the options. That is why they suggest matching the company's specific needs to the type of refrigeration they will need on a routine basis. "Customizing companies can fabricate almost any kind of refrigerated box for the back of the truck you want," says Balous Miller.

Suggestions already mentioned for the dry truck—truck lining, type of floor, type of door, lights and lift-gate—apply to refrigerated boxes as well. Other things to look for include:

***Flexible size of refrigerated box.** Some operators like boxes with a moveable bulkhead to vary the amount of refrigerated space. This type of box cuts down on the amount of fuel necessary to cool the refrigerated portion of the space.

***Guard rails on the inside walls of the box.** Caterers use mobile carts to roll foods and supplies onto refriger-

ated trucks. A guard rail cuts down on damage to the inside of the refrigerated box from these carts.

***Drains.** Drains allow for daily cleaning to meet sanitation requirements.

***Height of refrigerated box.** The height of the refrigerated box should be considered in relation to the geographic areas in which it will be used. "In older neighborhoods with cherry trees and other low trees our trucks take a lot of body damage, so we prefer trucks that are not too tall," notes Kim.

***An adequate training program.** Finally, all truck purchases should include an adequate training program for employees. "Employees should know how and where to add fuel to keep the refrigeration going, which gas stations carry propane and diesel fuels, how to maintain proper temperatures inside the trucks and when to report malfunctions so a vehicle will be properly serviced," explains Elias.

Adds Kim: "Because of toughened Department of Transportation (DOT) regulations it is now a law that drivers keep a daily log or manifest for safety. Each day our drivers check out brakes, lights, horns and seat belts to make sure they are working properly."

Consider a used vehicle

If a new truck is too expensive, you may want to consider a used vehicle. According to Elias, there are a number of ways to find out about good buys in used trucks—from talking to banks to visiting leasing companies to trading classified advertisements. "You have to pay attention to what is happening in the community. Basically, you want others in the community to know you are looking for a truck," says Elias.

"I look for low mileage in the used trucks I purchase," he adds. Most important, however, when buying a used truck is to have it thoroughly checked by a mechanic or expert. "It is well worth the few hundred dollars it may cost to have an expert look the equipment over," says Elias. □

Kathy Boyle is a writer in Rockville, Maryland.

ESSENTIALS FROM CONCEPT TO CLEAN-UP

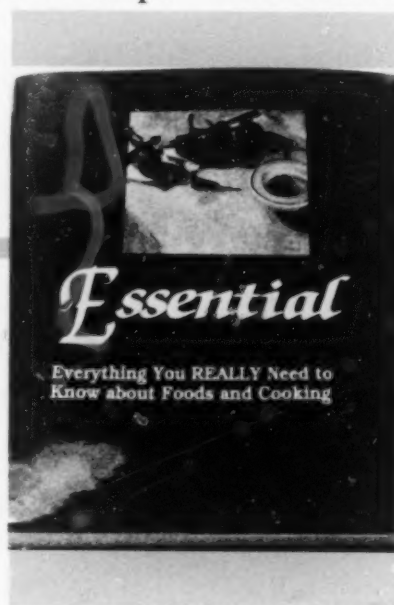
The Essential Cook was a 1989 winner in the writings category in the International Association of Cooking Professionals/Seagram Food and Beverage Book Competition. Competition judges told author Charles Delmar that had this writings category

not existed, they would have created one for his book. Just how and why *The Essential Cook* came to be and what it holds for the foodservice professional are topics Delmar discussed with ***Restaurants USA*** staff contributor Jennifer Batty.

When Charles Delmar decided to write *The Essential Cook: Everything You REALLY Need to Know about*

Foods and Cooking, a friend asked him where he "got off" trying to write a book about cooking when he didn't even know how to cook himself. After all, pointed out his friend, these cooking techniques are learned by master chefs through years of training. "I told him, 'That's what I'm trying to figure out,' and my friend said, 'Oh, you'll never do it.' But I did," beams Delmar.

Just what is it that Delmar has done? He's written a book that has been applauded by novices as well as restaurateurs, chefs, cookbook writers and food critics. One New York City caterer told him she had to buy two copies of his book because the staff was fighting over the first copy. A chef in Florida dragged Delmar back to his kitchen and confided that he "learned something different every time" he looked at the book. Others



have said that his book has become the basic reference for their cooking and writing endeavors.

Some of these professionals complain that Delmar is giving away trade secrets. "You know that common theory that if you ask a cook for a recipe, he will hold out an ingredient so that you won't be able to duplicate it? I don't think that's true; the problem is that chefs communicate on a different level, because of their knowledge of food; that's why most people just don't understand. You

can follow a recipe to the letter, and it still won't taste the way it did when someone else made it. You have to understand the basics first."

For those who turn their backs on a frying pan

So that is what Delmar put in his book—the essentials, the basics. "I wrote this book for the absolute ninny—for those people like me who turn their backs on a frying pan and it then catches on fire. (It still happens to me, by the way.) Now, you wouldn't turn your back on a hot frying pan if you knew what you were doing, but no cookbook will tell you not to turn your back on that pan. Mine will," says Delmar.

There are even sections in *The Essential Cook* on how to boil water and how to open a can—first you wash the can, then open it, then wash the can opener and put it away. These are truly basics, so how has *The Essential Cook* become so essential to many foodservice professionals? Even Delmar is surprised. "I

am overwhelmed by the response, shocked, because I didn't write it for them."

Delmar does admit, however, that there is a section in his book for almost every kind of foodservice professional. Managers will appreciate the chapters on safety and sanitation, chefs may find useful material in his chapter on combination cookery, and servers and kitchen staff could benefit from a thorough understanding of the basics. "They [foodservice professionals] may not agree with all that's in the book, but anything they don't agree with, they will at least find provocative," he says.

Delmar points to chapter two as the most important one in his book about cooking and "the most valuable one for professionals. Any serious chef—serious enough to be above snobbery—can't help but read this chapter and come away with greater insight," he says with confidence.

"Foodservice professionals have been taught that there are two ways to cook—dry cooking and wet cooking. Foods cooked in oil are included in dry cooking, but that doesn't make any sense. If you put your finger in a bottle of Wesson, it's not dry, it's wet.

"I rethought this concept after doing research and came up with three ways of cooking: cooking in liquids, cooking in dry heat and cooking in fat." This concept is covered in chapter two, as are baking and roasting—two other confusing and misused terms.

"Knowing basic definitions and distinctions between terms is the first step toward avoiding confusion and controlling what you do." What Delmar set out to do in chapter two of his book is to write definitions that hold up. But the book has much greater scope than this chapter. What Delmar included goes back to the idea for the book itself.

How the book came to be

Delmar wasn't much of a cook when he found himself living alone for the first time at age 35; so he looked for help. "I couldn't find a [cook] book I could understand," he recalls.

In 1975 he bought *The Cook's*

Companion for \$1, and it was the first cookbook Delmar had found that explained some of the basics, such as what kind of chicken to buy. He began buying more cookbooks until he had more than 200, but he still couldn't find the definitive text he was seeking.

As a sales and editorial representative for Wadsworth, a textbook publisher in Belmont, California, Delmar had access to many books used in cooking schools. "None of them were for lay people. They were dull textbooks for professional cooks, but they covered things like the difference between frying in peanut oil or butter.

"I'm a teacher at heart (as a salesman of college textbooks I count myself as a teacher), so I rephrased this material for lay people. The difference between my book and other cookbooks is the difference between a book written by a teacher and one written by an expert. Experts assume they know everything and assume everyone else does, too; teachers assume you know nothing and account for it," Delmar explains.

Delmar spent 10 years conducting research and writing *The Essential Cook* and two years producing it himself. He read the tips and hints on cooking in newspapers and magazines, and he spoke to home economics teachers, professional and "mama" cooks and other foodservice professionals. He even asked the opinion of an organic chemist he visited on a sales call.

But he mostly learned about his topic by doing it wrong. A recipe, Delmar contends, begins in the middle of the cooking process. It doesn't tell you how to find the item called for in the recipe, clean it and store it. "I would cook for my friends and someone would say, 'No, dummy, that's not how you do it. You do it like this.' This stuff isn't in cookbooks because 'everyone' knows how to do it. It's like asking someone how you cook a steak; they look at you really funny because everyone already knows that. Who is this 'everyone'?"

The items Delmar felt he needed to cover in his book kept growing, as friends, chefs and teachers suggested additional topics or hints that needed

to be included. "This has been a group project of hundreds of people," he says.

"It took me years to pull the chapter on vegetables together; the information came from about 10 different books because no one book has it all. And if someone served me an artichoke, I would ask them about it." What he discovered was that books gave different instructions on how to prepare the same item and that cooks also had varying techniques for preparing similar meals. "I love writing, teaching and organizing stuff, and I recognized as a problem that the cooking world ain't very well organized. (Now that I'm an award-winning writer I can use the word ain't.)"

Cooking concentrates on similarities

Part of his thinking process involves the themes of cooking. "It's a concentration on similarities. Recipes are but variations on a common theme. No one bothers to tell anyone the real themes—that recipes are endless combinations of general procedures. Yet, this is the way professionals cook, how they were taught in their cooking schools.

"There is so much more to cooking than just following a recipe. Pastry makers don't just follow the recipe—they account for such things as the weight of the flour. Your grandma could reach down into the flour bin without using a measuring cup and shake out the flour until it felt just right. This is how good cooks do it," notes Delmar. "Again, I focused on the similarities; recipes focus on the differences. Good cooks come to be good by knowing the similarities."

But today people don't grow up learning at their mother's side, he says. "Home economics classes don't teach the basics anymore, or they teach about the differences between a carbohydrate and a protein. Well, I don't eat carbohydrates and proteins; I eat bananas and raisins and meat. These concepts needed to be put into terms people would understand."

Why would people want to understand these ideas? As consumers eat out more and experiment with ethnic and regional dishes, they will want to



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recreate that experience at home, Delmar suggests. Unfortunately, as people depend more and more on the well-prepared meals found outside the home, they forget or don't bother to learn the basics of cooking. So reliving that fabulous meal via their own two hands could be an arduous task.

"These people cook only when it is essential. That's why I gave them the basics they really need. I organized it very logically. There's a book called *Cooking A to Z*, but the world's not organized alphabetically or by recipes, but by subjects like yeast or chicken." The basics are so important, emphasizes Delmar, because in

THICKENERS

Almost by definition, any hot sauce is simply a seasoned liquid that is thickened. The liquid used for cooking stews or braises, for example, is made not only less runny but also more flavorful with the addition of cornstarch or a roux or some other thickener in order to bind the ingredients to make what most of us would identify as a casserole. And of course, any liquid that is used as a topping for foods should be thickened in some way so that it can cling to the surface of foods and not soak into them.

The thickness of any hot sauce will be determined by the characteristics of the thickener as well as the amount, so you should know as much as you can about each one. Also when making a hot sauce, it is better to make it thicker than desired and then thin it if necessary. It is easier and takes less time to thin a thick sauce than to thicken one that is too thin. Remember, though, that any hot sauce will thicken as it cools.

Thickening by reducing the liquid.

Reducing is certainly the easiest way to thicken any liquid. Lately, more and more people, especially diet-conscious folk, have been using this method because it thickens liquids without adding calories or fats. The more a liquid is reduced, the less additional thickener it will require.

To reduce a liquid, simply simmer it in an uncovered container to evaporate some of its water content. The greater the surface area of the liquid, the faster it will be reduced. A major consideration with this method is that the flavors of the liquid become more concentrated as it is reduced.

Cooked and pureed vegetables.

Cooked and pureed vegetables, especially onions and potatoes, can be used to thicken liquids and give them more flavor. Brown sauces and sauces for braises and stews, for example, are often thickened with a puree of their flavoring vegetables. Since the thickening ability varies with the vegetable, it is best to start by using one tablespoon per cup of liquid, adding more as needed.

Starch thickeners.

Dry thickeners from the starch family—flour, cornstarch, potato starch and arrowroot—are the thickeners that are used most often to thicken casseroles, stews, white sauces, brown sauces and gravies. Flour is the most commonly used by far, but cornstarch, arrowroot and potato starch can all be substituted for it. In fact, cornstarch has come to be favored over flour by many cooks because it doesn't have the starchy taste of flour. Consequently, it doesn't require cooking in added fat, as flour does, to eliminate its starchy taste.

Starches other than flour all have about twice the thickening power of flour. If you want to substitute cornstarch or one of the other starches for flour, simply use half as much. For each cup of liquid, use flour in the following amounts (or half these amounts for other starches): *thin sauce*, 1½ Tbs. flour; *medium-thick sauce*, 1½ to 3 Tbs. flour; *thick sauce*, 3 to 4 Tbs. flour.

—Excerpted with permission from *The Essential Cook*

order to follow a recipe or modify or redo it, a person has to understand the cooking processes. That goes for professionals as well as novices.

"I've had people tell me this book is so logical and ask, 'Why hasn't anybody done it this way before?' I say, 'I don't know.'"

Delmar made the decision to publish the book himself so that he could have total control over the product and include everything he wanted to, such as a section on how to clean the kitchen. The house pictured on the spine of the book is Hill House, a Japanese house he designed and lives in in Chapel Hill, North Carolina.

There are loving touches Delmar gave to his book, using his more than 20 years of publishing experience. The book's cover is laminated, so that grease splattered on it won't show; and when the jacket wears out, the leather cover is plastic-coated for durability.

COOKING CONSIDERATIONS FOR STARCHES

1. To avoid lumps, never add a dry starch directly to hot fat or liquid. Instead, dissolve the thickener in cool liquid to make what is called a *wash* or in warm fat to make what is called a *roux*. Then add the wash or roux to the remaining liquid.

2. For maximum thickening, heat liquids containing starches to a slow simmer, stirring them frequently.

3. All-purpose flour and bread flour are the two most frequently used dry thickeners. Unless flour is cooked a long time in liquid, or first cooked in fat to make a roux, it will produce sauces with a starchy taste.

4. Cornstarch and arrowroot produce sauces that are clear and glossy without any starchy taste. They are best suited for sweet sauces and glazes but are also good for making gravy and for thickening casseroles, braises and stews.

5. To substitute another starch for flour, use half the amount of flour called for.

6. High temperatures or excessive stirring will cause sauces thickened with arrowroot or potato starch to thin.

—from *The Essential Cook*

"Books are very personal things, and I wanted my readers to be able to personalize their books," he says. So Delmar made the margins on the outside of the pages wide enough for readers to "talk back to the book," and the print is large and readable. Artists collaborated with him on the drawings. One of the artists "read the book and illustrated from the perspective of a learner," he says.

So far the book isn't selling that well, says Delmar. "Some people look at it and see that it isn't a recipe book and think, 'If it ain't got recipes, what could it have?'" Moreover, the influx of cookbooks into the market is tremendous, with more than 1,000 books published the same year as Delmar's. He says he tries to comfort himself by remembering that *The Joy of Cooking* didn't sell very well at first; but when you "have a quarter of your life and all your money invested," it's hard not to worry. "I may end up losing everything I have; but if I do, I'll start over on a new adventure," he says.

And there are already new adventures in the works. In the next year or two Delmar expects to publish two more books that expand on chapters in *The Essential Cook*. The first one will be called *How Good Cooks Do It (and Other Facts of Life): What Cooks Need to Know About Cooking Basics*, and the second one will be titled *First You Steal a Chicken: What Cooks Really Need to Know About Foods and How to Fix Them*. He is in the process of trying to find a major publisher to produce them.

Delmar believes he has the necessary credentials to get backing because he is not a gourmet cook. "I'm an essential cook—an O.K. cook. I'm not an imaginative or creative cook," he says. "I have fun with cooking and don't take it that seriously. That's what I'd like my readers to do too." □

Editor's note: For readers of *Restaurants USA*, Charles Delmar is offering *The Essential Cook*, which is normally priced at \$24.95, for \$20 (including shipping and handling.) He is accepting credit-card sales only at 1-800-826-8899.



"The difference between my book and other cookbooks is the difference between a book written by a teacher and one written by an expert. Experts assume they know everything and assume everyone else does, too; teachers assume you know nothing and account for it."

As awareness of the relationship between nutrition and health continues to increase, consumers are asking more questions about the foods they eat and the potential effect on their health. As Allan Elias, owner of Allen Elias Custom Catering in Minneapolis, Minnesota, emphasizes, "It's a stay-well generation of consumers out there."

However, these same consumers are also insisting on food that does not compromise on taste or appearance. This desire to have it both ways—good food and good health—has started to influence catered meals.

Consumer interests up close

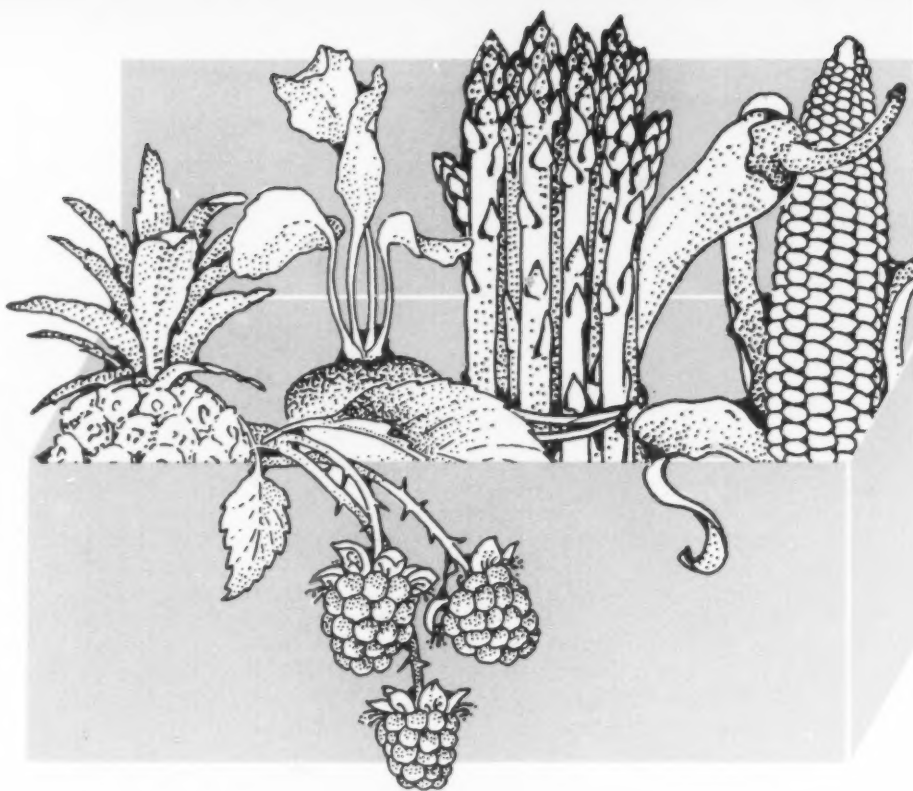
How are consumer interests influencing caterers?

□ *Fresh.* Consumers advocate using fresh products close to their natural state to help ensure both a higher-quality product and optimal flavor. Caterers are responding by using local, regional and seasonal ingredients.

□ *Simpler.* Today's culinary emphasis on "back to the basics" has caterers adapting and simplifying foods. Uncomplicated cooking preparations, such as grilling, stir-frying, steaming and poaching are examples of techniques that are being used to bring out the flavors of foods.

□ *Lighter.* Although there will always be a market for a 12-oz. steak with potatoes and gravy, the emphasis is increasingly on lighter foods. More oil-based sauces and dressings, marinades, fruit mustards, vinaigrettes and relishes are being utilized to lighten up catered fare. Customers are also requesting leaner cuts of meat and smaller portions.

□ *Flavorful.* No longer satisfied with a plain piece of baked fish or chicken, customers are demanding more highly flavored foods. To meet the desire for healthier fare without sensual deprivation, caterers are turning to ethnic foods for inspiration. Popular choices are Thai foods, which combine and contrast the sensations of spicy, sweet and sour by using such exotic herbs and seasonings as lemon grass, cilantro,



NUTRITION

SLIPS INTO THE CATERING WORLD

Fresh. Simpler. Lighter. Flavorful. These are the adjectives that describe the foods a growing health-conscious public is requesting of caterers.

by Gloria Satur

ginger, coconut and chili peppers, and Southwestern dishes that rely on chilis, beans, grains and corn.

The major interests expressed by consumers include foods lower in fat, cholesterol and sodium. Customers are asking for these healthier options in a variety of ways. Bruce Potter, owner of Hillcrest Catering in Waltham, Massachusetts, says that guests invited to the social affairs he caters often call in advance to ask for a vegetarian or fish-dish substitution. "Most people expect a chicken or roast beef entree at a wedding," he explains. "These special requests can

represent up to 10 to 15 percent of a guest list of 120 to 150 people."

John William Schenk, chef-owner of J. William's Caterers in Evergreen, Colorado, reports that his affluent and somewhat older customers often request specific recipes to meet their family's nutritional needs. "In that case, I'll test their recipes and make any adjustments I may feel are necessary, keeping in mind restrictions I need to adhere to," says Schenk.

Marsha Levine, co-partner in Party Fare, Inc., in Tampa, Florida, caters to local Fortune 500 companies that have begun to set their own nutri-

tional guidelines. One company no longer allows red meat on its menu. Another allows no desserts, such as pastries, cakes or cookies. And a third demands a cholesterol-free menu.

Although such requests are by no means a homogeneous trend, there are some definite directions. Variables include the type of function, the size of the party and the location.

An individual choice vs. a group function

"When customers have the opportunity to choose for themselves, they are making healthier food choices," declares Amy Zintl, director of sales and marketing for Creative Gourmets in Boston.

Creative Gourmets keeps up with consumer interests by including a salt substitute with its meals as well as sauces and condiments on the side. It also features lighter menu alternatives. One popular item is a boneless, skinless breast of chicken, marinated in lemon tarragon and grilled. Served cold, it is cut on the bias and fanned out. A favorite salad is green beans served with a Thai-style dressing and fresh coconut. "When repeat customers are asked why they keep coming back, it's often because of the lighter foods that we offer," notes Zintl.

Zintl adds that the trend is not as apparent at group functions, when a meeting planner must accommodate the interests of a diverse group. "Special events are also seen as a time to indulge," she says.

Michael Roman, president of the National Institute for Off Premise Catering in Chicago, concurs. "In smaller purchases for corporations—lunches for example—there is a blossoming concern for nutrition and good-quality food," he says. "However, if someone's daughter is getting married or an uncle is celebrating a 40th birthday, people tend to throw nutrition to the wind. They don't want the possibility of offending someone, so they play it safe."

Meeting the challenge

Caterers such as Creative Gourmets and John William Schenk believe they are successfully meeting the challenge of catering healthier meals. In lieu of a hollandaise sauce, for exam-

GINGER-PEANUT DIP WITH RAW VEGETABLES

Yields about 2 cups

Ingredients:

1½ cups creamy peanut butter
2 medium onions, chopped
6 garlic cloves, minced
6 Tbs. fresh lemon juice
¼ cup chopped fresh cilantro
4 tspns. grated fresh ginger
4 tspns. soy sauce
2 tspns. dried red pepper flakes
2 tspns. turmeric

Method:

Combine all ingredients in a blender or food processor and puree until smooth. Add water to thin, if necessary. Transfer to bowl. Serve peanut dip with vegetables, such as blanched Chinese long beans, snow peas, peeled jicama, water chestnuts, carrots and celery.

Nutritional analysis per Tbs. (32 per recipe): 87.6 cal., 3.3 g. carb., 4.2 g. protein, 7.2 g. fat, 110.4 mg. sodium, 0 mg. cholesterol

—Allan Elias Custom Catering

ple, Schenk serves steamed asparagus with a wild-berry yogurt dip.

One of his "light" specialties is grilled duck breast with raspberry mustard. Very ripe raspberries are cooked with Sauvignon or Fume Blanc wine and lemon zest. They are then pressed through a sieve and whole-grain pommery mustard is stirred in. This condiment is served with a duck breast that has been marinated overnight in cilantro, mint, coarse black pepper and olive oil, and has been grilled medium-rare.

For another mustard-based dish, Schenk combines fresh ripe peaches with wine champagne vinegar, sugar and mustard. He serves the mustard with sliced grilled chicken breast and garnishes the dish with a blanched, fanned peach half.

Relishes are another substitute for heavy cream-based sauces. A pineapple-papaya relish, for example, is a flavorful accompaniment to grilled halibut, mahi mahi or salmon. Schenk combines diced pineapple and papaya with red bell pepper and red onion and then cooks this mixture with red wine vinegar, sorrel, salt, pepper and extra-virgin olive oil. "The combinations and options are limit-

less once you begin thinking of alternative ways to season and flavor foods," notes Schenk.

Michael Roman adds that another positive use of nutrition is to serve fresh fruit or fruit kebobs at mid-afternoon meeting breaks. "Four years ago we sold a tremendous amount of cheese trays," relates Allan Elias of Allan Elias Custom Catering. "Today our cheese-platter consumption is down by 35 to 45 percent. Instead, we're now receiving requests for fruit and vegetable trays." The fresh fruit is paired with a honey-yogurt dip. The raw vegetables go well with a ginger-peanut dip, and a hummus dip is served with pita bread. "These dishes are being requested both as hors d'oeuvres or as afternoon alternatives to cookies and bars," says Elias.

When it comes to desserts, customers still are apt to go all out, especially if it's a celebratory occasion. However, the lighter trend has even filtered into this domain. "Although we still do a lot of heavy desserts," notes Elias, "they're not moving out of here like they used to." His lighter options include baked apple served with a light caramel-and-brandied sauce or a fresh-fruit dessert. At Creative Gourmets orders are up for fruit tarts, crumbs and crisps. "Fruit sorbets are also very popular," adds Zintl, "especially at dinners, because they are perceived as being elegant."

Marketing healthy eating

Although it's readily acknowledged that people do not want "health" pushed down their throats, caterers today are trying to anticipate consumer interest in lighter foods. Some are incorporating this new lighter style of cooking into their philosophy, whereas others offer a few lighter alternatives to give consumers a choice. But everyone is quick to add that healthful menu alternatives should not differ from regular menu items in quality, taste, appearance and price. "You can't make people pay more for items because they're good for them," notes Zintl. "If it costs more, you're going to lose that market."

Gloria Satur is a food and nutrition consultant in Washington DC.

Until recently, the tossed salad was a neglected aspect of the menu. Chefs and guests alike gave little thought to the ingredients or dressings. Customers weren't given much of a choice, while chefs devoted their valuable time to developing other portions of the menu.

A bounty of lettuces

The days of restaurants offering the same basic house salads and dressings are over. A bounty of dark, nutritious leaf lettuces, such as red and green leaf lettuce, romaine, escarole, endive, red oak and Boston bibb lettuce, have become widely available, and they offer appealing textures, tastes and nutrients.

Tom Thumb butterhead, buttercrunch and lamb's ear—although not as plentiful—are also ideal for additions to salads, as are swiss chard, arugula, spinach, radicchio, curly endive and kale.

The best way to incorporate these greens into the salad is to mix two or three varieties together. Red swiss chard adds strong flavor to a salad of romaine and green leaf lettuce. Mildly flavored bibb lettuce benefits from the addition of sharply flavored spinach or escarole. Radicchio adds vivid color and a slight bitterness.

Once the core of the tossed salad has been selected, it's time to add a colorful selection of fruits and vegetables for flavor and texture. At my restaurant, I offer small amounts of a variety of fresh ingredients, including alfalfa sprouts, red onions, cherry tomatoes, shredded carrots and red cabbage, sliced mushrooms, slivered almonds, cashews, pine nuts, blanched broccoli, diced apples and pears, cucumbers and bell peppers. Occasionally, I offer optional toppings, such as minced jalapeno peppers, sprigs of fresh basil, mint, arugula, watercress, diced pineapples, Asian pears and tomatillos.

A creative momentum

The next stage is the dressing—and here is where the discovery of fresh fruit vinaigrettes has added a creative momentum. Inspired by the popularity of Dijon vinaigrette in the 1980s, fresh fruit vinaigrettes are quick and easy to make and full of invigorating flavors. Fruit vinaigrettes also appeal

to health-minded customers, as they are prepared with about half as much oil as most salad dressings.

I first discovered the culinary potential of fruit vinaigrettes when I was in the midst of making a batch of chutney. While chopping mangoes, papayas and pineapples, I was contemplating a new house dressing for the restaurant's menu. In a moment of inspired adventure, I changed course and made the chutney into a vinaigrette. I simmered the fruit in vinegar, pureed the mixture, drizzled oil into it and then chilled the dressing. I

PLUM-NECTARINE VINAIGRETTE

Yields 4 cups

Ingredients:

4 plums, diced
3 nectarines, diced
1½ cup vinegar
¼ cup honey
¼ tspn. salt
¼ tspn. white pepper
¾ cup olive or other vegetable oil
3 tspn. fresh minced mint or basil

Method:

Place the plums, nectarines and vinegar in a nonreactive saucepan and cook for about 10 minutes over medium heat. Cool mixture in refrigerator for about 30 minutes.

Add fruit mixture, honey and seasonings to a food processor fitted with a steel blade. Blend for 20 to 30 seconds or until mixture is smooth. Slowly drizzle in the oil while the motor is running. Process for 15 to 20 seconds more. Whisk in herbs.*

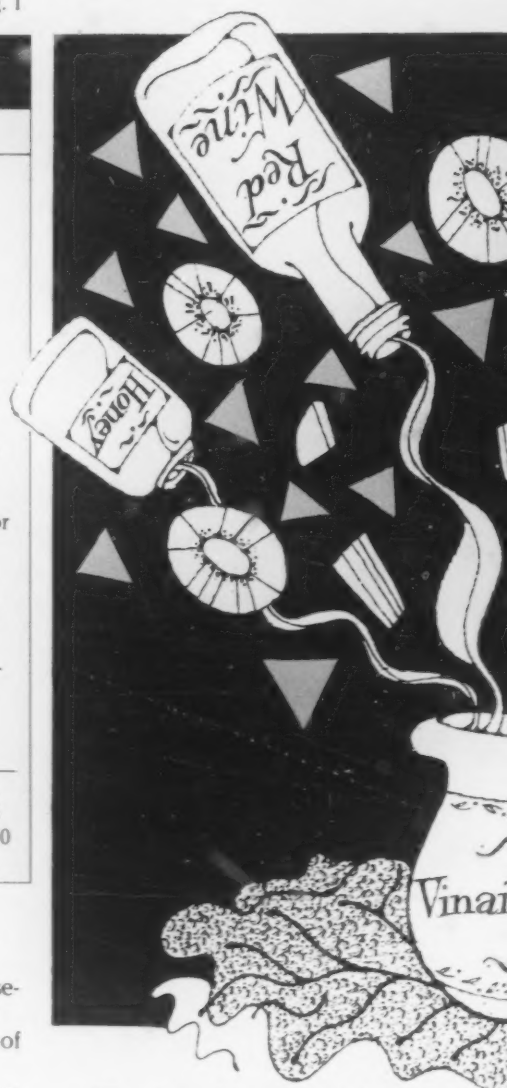
Nutritional analysis per Tbs. (64 Tbs. per recipe): 32.6 cal., 2.6 g. carb., 2.5 g. fat, 4.3 mg. sodium, 0.1 g. protein, 0 mg. cholesterol

offered the tropical-fruit vinaigrette that night, and guests loved it.

I soon began offering a rotating selection of fresh fruit vinaigrettes as house dressings, featuring a variety of fresh fruits with fresh herbs and honey. Customers often asked to purchase some to take home with them after the meal.

Once I began preparing fresh fruit vinaigrettes, I was emancipated from the large plastic vats of salad dressings that I, and every other res-

FRESH VINAIGRETTE FOR THE



The humble salad has been reimagined with fresh fruits, herbs, and a variety of vegetables, creating a new array of tangy flavors.

by J

-FRUIT -RETTES HE '90S



juvenated with fresh, leafy greens
bles and fruits, and an innovative
y fruit vinaigrettes.

y Solomon

taurant on the block, was serving. I could also boast that our salad dressings were free of the latent sweeteners, turbo-calories and chemical additives that are prevalent in many commercial dressings.

A simple base

As with the Dijon vinaigrette—which is the simple marriage of oil, vinegar and Dijon mustard—fresh fruit vinaigrettes are made from a variety of vinegars and oils. Vinegar, which is French for “soured wine,” is usually made from red wine or white wine,

TROPICAL-FRUIT VINAIGRETTE

Yields 4 cups

Ingredients:

1 papaya, seeded, peeled and diced
1 mango, peeled, pitted and diced
1 kiwi, peeled and diced
1 cup diced fresh pineapple
1½ cups red wine vinegar
¼ cup honey
¼ tspn. salt
¼ tspn. white pepper
1¼ cups vegetable oil

Method:

Place papaya, mango, kiwi, pineapple, and vinegar in a nonreactive saucepan and cook for 5 to 7 minutes over medium heat. Cool mixture in refrigerator for about 30 minutes.

Add fruit mixture, honey and seasonings to a food processor fitted with a steel blade. Blend for 20 to 30 seconds or until mixture is smooth. Slowly drizzle in the oil while the motor is running, and process for 10 to 20 seconds more.*

Nutritional analysis per Tbs. (64 Tbs. per recipe): 45.6 cal., 2.4 g. carb., 4.1 g. fat, < 0.1 g. protein, 8.7 mg. sodium, 0 mg. cholesterol

sherry, rice wine, apple cider or champagne. All can be used for vinaigrettes, but I prefer red wine vinegar. The degree of tartness can be tailored to taste by adding slightly more vinegar for more tartness or more oil for a smoother finish.

Balsamic vinegar, which is aged longer and is less acidic than most vinegars, is the superior—but most expensive—vinegar to use for a vinaigrette. I recommend balsamic vinegar when food cost is not a consideration.

Olive oil is the healthiest oil to use for a vinaigrette, as it contains the greatest percentage of mono-unsaturated fats. Soybean oil with a blend of olive oil is adequate for most vinaigrettes and less expensive. Flavored oils, such as walnut, peanut and avocado, are ideal for delicate salads, but they may be overpowered by the strongly flavored fruit vinaigrettes.

Inspire dressings

In addition to adding a splash of color and flavor to tossed salads, these velvety vinaigrettes enhance a variety of meals. They may be drizzled over steamed asparagus, carrots, beets, broccoli or artichokes, adding a nuance of flavor and replacing the traditional butter or salt at the same time. They also add zest to grilled chicken or pork entrees and can make a light, delectable dressing for a pasta salad with chicken, broccoli, tomatoes and carrots.

Fresh fruit vinaigrettes can inspire hearty lunch salads as well. For a tropical salad, diced papaya, mango, pineapple and shredded coconut can be added to the nucleus of leafy greens and then served with a tropical-fruit vinaigrette. For a salad with a southwestern flair, leafy greens can be tossed with sprigs of cilantro, minced jalapeno peppers, corn kernels, salsa, shredded jicama and raspberry or plum-nectarine vinaigrette. A fruit salad of diced papaya, banana, Asian pear and pineapple, tossed with a plum-nectarine or apricot-rhubarb vinaigrette, is a jazzy alternative to a rich dessert.

Serving the fruit vinaigrette on the side in a small glass pitcher is an attractive way to showcase the extravagant dressing. Allowing the customer to spoon the dressing over the salad unfailingly pleases customers and also displays the restaurant's attractive tossed salad, undoubtedly creating a memorable impression. □

*Serve the dressing immediately or refrigerate. If kept refrigerated, the vinaigrette should keep for 1 to 2 weeks.

Jay Solomon is the author of *Condiments! Chutneys, Relishes, and Table Sauces*, published this fall by *The Crossing Press, Freedom, CA 95019*. He is also the chef/owner of Jay's Clinton Hall Cafe in Ithaca, New York.

HERBS

ARE HERE TO STAY

by Dennis Blank

The morning air is crisp as executive chef Heinz Hautle walks along a red brick pathway cut between an immaculately groomed lawn and dome-covered gazebos. He stops to look over the gardens. Something new has been added between the low-cut shrubs.

Under his direction, gardeners have put in decorative herb gardens. There is a selection of chives, basil, sage, rosemary, thyme and other herbs. For Hautle, who oversees the gourmet cuisine at the Hotel Hershey in Hershey, Pennsylvania, using fresh herbs to satisfy the palates of customers is not only fun but also a challenge. "It's back to the basics, really," Hautle explains. "Herbs enhance the flavor of food."

Using fresh-grown herbs to season food and to accentuate plate decorations is as natural as breathing to this happy chef. "God created herbs to add pleasure to life and cooking," he says. Hautle enjoys using fresh lovage "fairly sparingly" along with onions and celery in his soup pots, but his favorite way to use herbs is to add them to cooking oils. "We heat up the oil. After it gets hot, we take it off the fire and let it cool," he explains. It is at that point that a four-ounce fresh-cut herb, such as tarragon or rosemary, is added. (There is too much danger of the herb being burnt if it were added while the oil was on the fire, he notes.) An example of a dish Hautle serves his patrons is *Roast Supreme au Pheasant under Glass* (Calvados cream sauce on pheasant breast, placed on Virginia Smithfield ham, with a sprig of rosemary and covered with a glass dome).



A nationwide trend

Hautle is not alone in favoring herbs. Chefs around the country are using larger quantities of fresh herbs to satisfy the aesthetics of their diners and the tastebuds of health-conscious patrons. The herb flavors replace not only salt but also cholesterol-heavy vegetable oils in every part of a restaurant's menu.

The use of herbs in the 300 meals served daily at the Waldorf Astoria's Peacock Alley restaurant in New York City has increased 50 percent in the last two years, says executive chef John Doherty. "As fresh herbs become more available, we really find more uses for them," he says.

"When you use herbs, you have to have a balance," Doherty adds. "You have to know their strengths and what they will do." Doherty is especially fond of parsley stems. Incorporating them with other aromatic herbs gives food a "very earthy taste," he says.

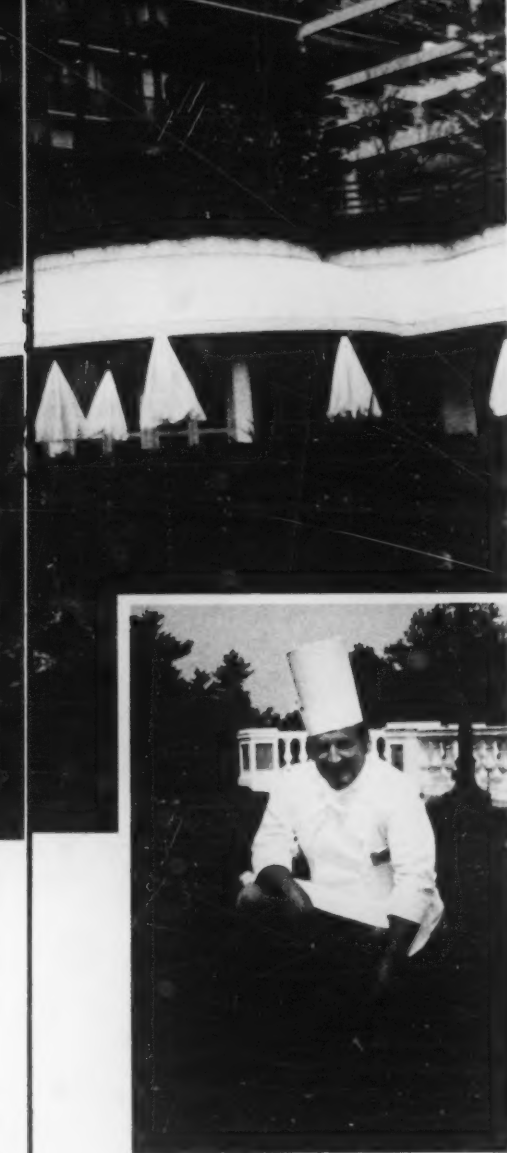
Using just the right amount of herbs is key to the ultimate success of the meal, agrees French-born Francis Drillien, executive chef at the Ambassador Grill at the United Nations Plaza Hotel in New York City. He believes that too many herbs can drown the food.

Drillien's favorite herb is rosemary. One of his signature recipes is a rosemary-scented chicken dish. Drillien first precooks a chicken in a clay steam pot. He then collects the juices and mixes them with vegetables, such as carrots and turnips, and adds a sprig of rosemary. Next, the mixture is put inside the chicken, and the chicken is covered with a bread dough and baked. The dough helps keep the rosemary inside the chicken. "It is very aromatic. If you cut the dough just at the neck, the perfume comes out; and it is unbelievable," he says.

For all types of restaurants

"You find not only more and more five-star restaurants but more middle-of-the-road restaurants using herbs," notes Maureen Buehrle, former executive director of the International Herb Growers and Marketers Association in Silver Springs, Pennsylvania.

A lot of smaller herb growers have done well pioneering sales to restaurants by taking them samples and recipes. Many started selling in small quantities of \$5 and \$10 a week and quickly increased sales as customers complimented the chefs on their herb-flavored dishes.



Many hotel chefs are great fans of herbs. Marco Barblitta, executive chef of the Hyatt Regency Grand Cypress in Orlando, Florida, and Heinz Haulte, executive chef of the Hotel Hershey in Hershey, Pennsylvania, enjoy picking herbs from their gardens.

"I see the trend developing more and more in restaurants," notes Peter J. Goldstein, who supplies more than 100 New York City restaurants with fresh herbs and tender fresh-cut salads flown in from California. Goldstein, who started from scratch two years ago, runs two delivery trucks, putting together orders as early as 4 a.m. In a week's time he packages and delivers between 500 and 600 pounds of herbs. That translates into an annual income of \$750,000.

"I think in general the uses and

LEMON AND ROSEMARY STEAMED PUDDING

Serves 8

The balance between sweet sugar and tart lemon juice is what gives this pudding its strong character. The surprising addition of rosemary does not make this pudding at all savory. The rosemary becomes diminished as a flavor and more important as an aroma.

This pudding is quite dense and hearty. Covered, it rewarms easily in the oven.

Ingredients:

13 Tbs. sweet butter
1 cup sugar
2 eggs
2½ cups dry bread crumbs
½ cup milk
1 tspn. baking powder
1 lemon, grated zest only
2 Tbs. chopped fresh rosemary
2 cups lemon custard*

Method:

Butter a pudding mold (or a 1-pound coffee can) with 1 Tbs. of the butter. Fill a 3-quart pot with water and bring to a boil over high heat.

In a mixer, cream sugar and remaining butter together on medium speed. Add the eggs and mix to incorporate. Add bread crumbs, milk, baking powder, lemon zest, and rosemary and mix until smooth. Pour the batter into a mixing bowl and fold 1 cup of the lemon custard into the batter. Do not mix well. Pretend you are making a marble cake.

Pour the batter into the prepared pudding mold or coffee can. Do not fill more than three-quarters full. Cover tightly. Place in boiling water, reduce heat to low and gently simmer for 2½ hours. Remove pudding from water and let cool for 10 minutes before unmolding. The pudding should be served warm or at room temperature with the remaining cup of lemon custard as an accompaniment.

*For 1 quart of lemon custard combine:

5 eggs
5 egg yolks
2 cups sugar
1 cup fresh lemon juice
2 lemons, grated zest only
½ cup unsalted butter

—from *Secret Ingredients*, by Michael Roberts (Bantam Books, 1988)

Nutritional analysis per serving: 595.2 cal., 74.3 g. carb., 31.1 g. fat, 9.3 g. protein, 509.8 mg. sodium, 254.3 mg. cholesterol

CELERY SOUP WITH LOVAGE AND RICE

Serves 6

Lovage is a tall, handsome perennial with large leaves that look like parsley or celery. In fact the leaves taste something like celery, but more wild and rich; and the whole thing looks like a somewhat disorganized celery plant.

THE STOCK

2 cups chopped leek greens and root
2 to 3 celery stalks, chopped, plus a handful of celery leaves
2 bay leaves
5 parsley branches
Salt
1½ quarts water

Wash the leek greens and celery, put all the stock ingredients into a pot, cover with water and bring to a boil. Simmer for 25 minutes and strain.

THE SOUP

2 med.-sized or 1 large leek (white part only), cut into small squares
1 small red or yellow onion, finely chopped
2 Tbs. chopped parsley
2 cups diced celery, in small, even pieces
1 Tbs. chopped lovage
2 Tbs. butter
Salt
1 cup light cream
½ cup cooked white rice
2 tspn. finely chopped lovage leaves
Freshly ground pepper

While the stock is cooking, wash and chop vegetables for the soup. Melt butter in a soup pot, add the vegetables and salt, and cook gently for 10 minutes. Add the stock, bring to a boil and simmer until celery is tender, about 25 minutes.

To give the soup a creamy back-ground texture, puree 1 or 2 cups; then return it to the pot. Stir in the milk or cream. Season to taste with salt. Serve soup in warmed soup plates with a couple of spoonfuls of rice in each plate. Garnish with fresh lovage and pepper or stir in a spoonful of lovage butter.

—from *The Savory Way* by Deborah Madison (Bantam Books, 1990)

Nutritional analysis per serving: 215.1 cal., 16.2 g. carb., 2.6 g. protein, 16.4 g. fat, 54.4 mg. cholesterol, about 123.0 mg. sodium

applications of herbs will continue to grow and become more varied," Goldstein says, noting that the newest application of herbs—in desserts—is growing. For example, lavender, lemon verbena and lemon basil are just a few of the herbs used to flavor ice cream.

Promoting herbs

The importance of herbs as a palate pleaser has led some restaurants to more actively promote them as a sales tool. Take for example the Hyatt Regency Grand Cypress in Orlando, Florida, which promotes not only its "cuisine naturelle" but also a colorful "chef's herbal garden," which tastefully mixes with tropical plants and a

running brook that overlooks a cascading waterfall.

The garden provides more than 30 herbs, including red basil, curry and pineapple mint. "When herbs are picked right before using them, the aroma is much stronger and you don't lose the oil," observes Rene Mettler, one of the chefs for the hotel's three restaurants.

"We stay with everything light," adds executive chef Marco Barbitta. "That's the main thing we want: No flour. No butter. No 'base.'" (Diners can request the Hyatt's special menus, which specify amount of calories, cholesterol, sodium and fat levels.)

"Herbs bring out the flavor," notes

Barbitta. He enjoys using rosemary for marinating meats and diced dill or sage in sauces for fish. The restaurants use about 25 pounds of fresh herbs daily. Barbitta is able to work herbs into every aspect of the menu, which has also been coordinated with guidelines set forth by the American Heart Association, the Pritikin Institute and Weight Watchers International.

No need for fanfare

The Union Canal House in Hershey, Pennsylvania, is a good example of a traditional and very popular steak and seafood restaurant that has not been afraid to venture into unfamiliar territory. Chefs Bryan Wilkinson and Ken Henderson have worked fresh herbs like basil, chives, dill, sage and peppermint into the established menu. In fact, they have enjoyed the results so much that they have started growing herbs in pots on windowsills during the winter to supplement their supply of fresh vegetables and herbs bought from an Amish farmer.

The Pavilion restaurant in the Four Seasons at Newport Beach, California, provides another example of how fresh herbs can be slipped subtly into the menu without a lot of fanfare.

"We have gradually increased our use of herbs like St. Joseph's Coat, parsley, exotic lavender, lemon thyme and apple mint," says chef de cuisine Bill Bracken. Bracken favors using a variety of herbs when cooking sauces for fish, usually adding them at the end of the sauce preparation. Some herbs, such as St. Joseph's Coat—which Bracken describes as an "off-breed spinach"—add a delicate touch to plate decoration. Others, like apple mint, bring an unusual flavor to dishes, especially salads.

Bracken found a good herb supplier, the Malibu Herb Farm, about 60 miles away from his operation, and now spends as much as \$1,000 a week on fresh herbs. He and other chefs expect the use of herbs to remain at about the same level for the next few years. "Herbs will always be there," he says. "I couldn't cook without them."

Dennis Blank is a freelance writer in Williston, North Dakota.

Herbs for a cause

The Jesse M. Unruh Herb Garden in Long Beach, California, has made it possible for restaurateurs in Southern California to receive a steady supply of organically grown, fresh herbs and to benefit a charitable organization.

The ornamental herb garden was started in 1988 by the Betty Clooney Foundation for Persons With Brain Injury, a nonprofit rehabilitation facility that offers affordable community-based vocational and recreational services for brain-injured people. Friends of Jesse M. Unruh (former treasurer of the state of California) and other foundations donated startup funds, and the Southern California Edison Company provided the 1/3-acre plot of land for the garden.

The herbs provide a great opportunity for members of the Betty Clooney Center as well as local businesses. "Herbs are wonderful for beginning gardeners because they are more forgiving than other types of plants," notes Margo Baumgardner, business manager of the center, which is located near the garden.

Young adult members of the Betty Clooney Center who choose to be in the horticulture unit (known as "The Green Team") tend the garden. The Green Team prepares participants to go back to work in the community through a "work hardening" emphasis on punctuality, independence and reliability.

More than 50 varieties of herbs are

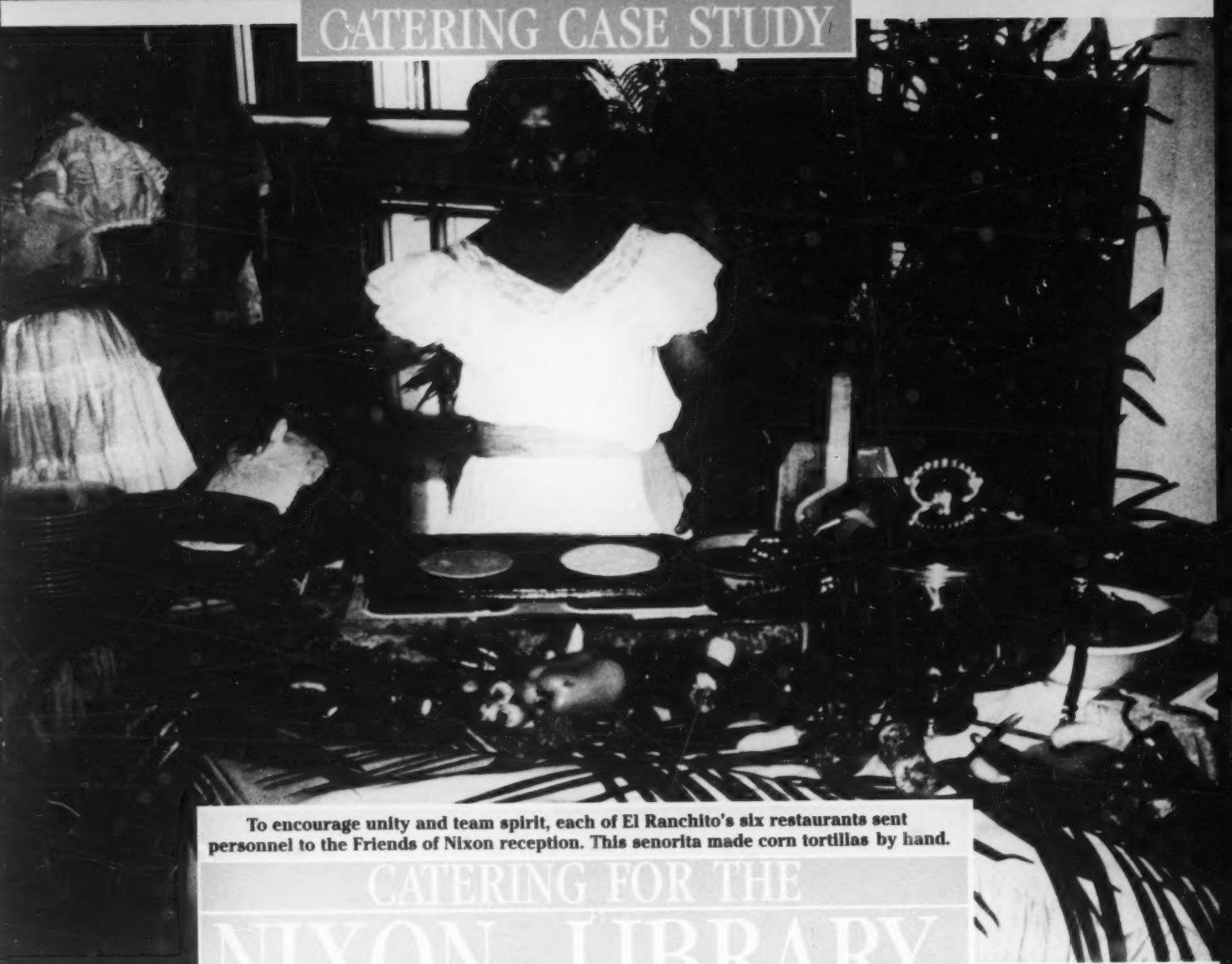
grown in the garden, including rosemary, thyme, lemon basil, opal basil, tarragon, pineapple sage, garlic, chives, dill and edible blossoms, such as pansies, violets, violas, nasturtiums, calendula and crane's bill geraniums. The garden's products are sold to restaurants, markets and area residents through a country store, Rosemary Clooney's Herbs, which is a converted garage of approximately 200 square feet located at the center and garden site.

With the growing preference for low-fat and low-sodium meals, the demand for these products is rising, resulting in increased sales and more customers. All proceeds from the sales go to the Betty Clooney Foundation.

The worthwhile cause of the Foundation pleases the herb garden's customers. Indeed, Joe Cochran Jr., executive chef at the Riva Restaurant in Loews Santa Monica Beach Hotel, buys 10 to 30 pounds—or "whatever is harvested in one week"—from the Jesse M. Unruh Herb Garden. He goes to other sources only when he needs supplements. "The Betty Clooney Foundation is a great cause to support," says Cochran, "and their herbs are organically grown and are spectacular, superior products."

Cochran uses the herbs in everything from meat, fish and poultry entrees to soup and pasta. "Take out the cream, butter, fats and salts, and the only thing left to flavor foods with naturally is herbs," he says. "Herbs give uncomplicated, clean flavors to food."

—L.H. (Zari) Malsawma



To encourage unity and team spirit, each of El Ranchito's six restaurants sent personnel to the Friends of Nixon reception. This seniorita made corn tortillas by hand.

CATERING FOR THE NIXON LIBRARY AND BIRTHPLACE

by Terri Woodard-Polster

It's not often that a local ethnic restaurant caters a community event that attracts the attention of the public across the nation and the world. The opportunity to cater the celebratory events that preceded the opening of the Richard Nixon Library and Birthplace in July 1990 in Yorba Linda, California, presented a new level of catering experience for the El Ranchito Mexican Restaurant chain from Southern California.

Avila's El Ranchito Restaurant was founded 24 years ago in Los Angeles as a family-operated business, with mama cooking traditional Mexican recipes, papa managing the front of the house

and all six children helping out. It has since expanded beyond the parent restaurant to include five more restaurants throughout Southern California, owned and managed by the Avila children. Most of the locations have catered off-premises parties, but Ma-

ria Elena Avila, owner and manager of the Brea restaurant, has been focusing on expanding the company's catering opportunities. The opening of the Richard Nixon Library and Birthplace was just the public relations opportunity she was looking for.



"Acapulco shrimp coctel" was just one of the savory south-of-the-border delights El Ranchito offered at the Friends of Nixon reception in July.

El Ranchito's involvement with the opening began with the recommendation of a very prominent and satisfied customer. When the planning committee met in February to begin designing the pre-opening parties, Nixon's fondness for Mexican food was considered, as was the referral. Thus, El Ranchito was included in the call for bids, which also was sent to three well-known caterers. The request for proposals outlined the objectives of six catering projects—three before the dedication, including a docent/volunteer reception for 100, a City of Yorba Linda leadership reception for 50 and a reception for the friends and former staff of Nixon for 300, plus three on the actual dedication day—a breakfast for the dignitaries, a breakfast for the press and a gala luncheon reception for 3,000.

The request for proposals contained detailed specifications for each event, including the date, hours of service, type of service requested, a suggestion of menu ideas, expected attendance and site location. The bidders were given three weeks to submit their proposals.

Designing the menus

The catering manager at El Ranchito's Brea restaurant, Ginger Perez, began preparing for the proposals by reviewing the restaurant's menus. Because all the evening parties were around the dinner hour, the search was for "finger foods" that

could make up a meal. Many of the popular restaurant items were included in smaller versions, such as chimichangas, empanadas, taquitos and tamales. But it was also necessary to add a few items that were not on the restaurant menus—to add flair and to "fill-in" with appropriate standup cocktail food. New items created included salads, such as "Azteca Pasta Salad," "Ensalada de Arroz" (rice salad) and "Ensalada Tropical" (fresh seasonal fruit salad tossed in a cointreau orange raspberry marinade and served with bowls of toasted flaked coconut, chopped walnuts, dates and raisins). To make the presentation sound inviting, word descriptions were added. For example, for the "acapulco shrimp coctel" the description read: "*Just like in Acapulco! Succulent shrimp, fresh-squeezed lime juice, spicy cilantro and ripe avocado tossed in a tasty Mexican 'coctel,' accompanied by crispy tostaditos. An elaborate tropical floral centerpiece and seashells will remind your guests of balmy Acapulco as our uniformed waitstaff serves the 'coctel' from oversized glass bowls.*"

The proposal also included special touches, such as a station of freshly made corn, flour and blue-corn tortilla chips; tostaditos served with an as-

sortment of fresh salsas; guacamole and chorizo-bean dip. Beverage stations featured both alcoholic and nonalcoholic drinks. All beverages had a Mexican flair, including the coffee that was to be served with cinnamon and chocolate.

Each of the event menus included a dessert station. For the large party for 3,000 many of the dessert items were to be subcontracted from a neighboring French restaurant, La Vie en Rose. The French restaurant furnished a list of 10 finger desserts it could prepare for less than 50 cents a piece for quantities of 500 to 1,000.

As El Ranchito evaluated the appropriateness of the menus, it also considered the logistics of production—how and where these items were going to be prepared—and the logistics of party design—what size, quantity and shape of tables would be needed to serve the numbers of guests anticipated for the various events. It was determined that a great majority of the food could be prepared ahead at the restaurant and brought to the site to be reheated or to be refrigerated and then placed directly on the table. Some of the items, such as the fried foods, needed to be freshly prepared, so a "site kitchen," consisting of work tables, gas stoves and deep-fat fryers, was designed into the proposals. Also, since the fajitas were intended to be "station-cooked" or "exhibition-cooked," this necessitated table-top



The Mexican buffet at the Friends of Nixon reception in July included a colorful array of corn, blue-corn and flour tortilla chips as well as a spicy selection of salsas, guacamole and chorizo-bean dip to accompany them.

grills, placed over butane-cassette gas stoves.

In order to finish a comprehensive bid, El Ranchito managed to acquire a site plan of the entire library facility from the general contractor at the site construction trailer, since none was furnished by the planning committee. A member of the construction management staff even scheduled a walk-through of the site, explaining where future landscaping, walls and other barriers were going to be. This information allowed El Ranchito to design a tentative floor plan of where it would place the separate food stations, bars and canopies.

With the site plan already in mind, El Ranchito calculated the number and variety of banquet tables it would need as well as the appropriate linens, tabletop equipment and floral arrangements. It figured the cost of these items by using a local party-rental company's inventory checklist. El Ranchito included these additional costs in its proposals.

Once the menu was designed for each event, quantities were established. Food quantities were based on the restaurant's standard rule of thumb for dinner-hour caterings: approximately 20 ounces of food per person. Knowing the food and beverage varieties and quantities allowed El Ranchito to come up with a selling price for each menu. Because the menu was designed simultaneously with the physical design of the party

layout, the service needs were evaluated for each table setup. El Ranchito also determined how many chefs and food servers were needed for each buffet station and the number of bus-ing and supervisory help that would be needed.

Putting it down on paper

After more than 100 hours of researching, designing, meeting and pricing, a proposal for each of the six separate events was prepared. The proposals followed the same basic format, including a cover letter from the restaurant's owner, menus, equipment lists and pricing breakdowns. Where a buffet station was described, special detail was included to indicate the proposed table decor and props. When the proposals were completed, Avila attempted to personally deliver them (a sales tactic I highly recommend in competitive bid situations), but she was instructed to just "put them in the mail."

Months went by before El Ranchito heard from the public relations firm again. When it did, the restaurant was asked to meet with the planning committee. El Ranchito was delighted with the opportunity to present its proposal at its newest restaurant in Brea.

"It was important for us to create the atmosphere of the parties we proposed on paper, and we went to extra expense to make sure we created a beautiful presentation," says Avila. A small mariachi band was hired for the occasion, photographs of past buffets and catering jobs were organized into a portfolio album, samples of the suggested menus were displayed on beautifully decorated tables in one section of the restaurant and a foamcore board was developed to depict the suggested floor plans put together from information gleaned on the site tour.

All of the committee's questions were answered regarding El Ranchito's past experience and planned approach to the library opening events.

Although the local media were beginning to search for a story on the social events surrounding the library opening, El Ranchito was asked not to divulge any information. One of the other bidding caterers did, however, and was automatically dropped from consideration. This "tight-lipped" media policy remained throughout the entire planning.

When the awaited phone call was finally received, El Ranchito learned that the very large event for 3,000 and the previous two breakfasts were awarded to a very large Los Angeles caterer, Ambrosia, experienced in serving thousands. The committee did, however, give all the other

events—plus two additional ones—to El Ranchito.

In retrospect, this was great foresight, as it would have been nearly impossible, with the changes in plans that would follow, for one company to pay attention to *all* the details necessary for *all* the events. The two occasions that were added to the festivities were a simple reception for Orange County tour-group leaders the month before the opening and a very important, formal sit-down luncheon to be hosted by William Simon, former Secretary of the Treasury for the Nixon cabinet and the current chairman of the Nixon Foundation.

Beginning the preparations

A local rental company was notified immediately of the confirmations, and as soon as the library building was completed, a walk-through meeting was called with the company at the site. All the tables, linens and equipment for the party area were specified and ordered, as well as the prep tables, deep-fat fryers and stoves needed in the "kitchen area." Because the library was built without a caterer's kitchen and the employee kitchen was too small and inconvenient, the truck loading dock area was cleared and set up as a kitchen. Electric "hot boxes" for "back-up" food were rented for a holding area near the party. New employee uniforms were also purchased, and special arrangements were made with a local cleaner to launder them daily.

A very close working relationship was established between Avila and the chairwoman in charge of all the catering. There were at least 12 to 15 meetings, recalls Avila, and she was told repeatedly to "stay flexible" as the count for each party fluctuated by 50 to 100 guests. The logistics for the events also changed daily, as the building neared completion and as more influential people close to Nixon became involved in the planning. This continual "changing of the guard" was an unknown factor and was very difficult to work with. If she were in this position again, Avila says, she would "be firmer with clients and put limitations and deadlines on them."

Preparing the food for more than

1,000 guests within four days would have put too much pressure on the Brea restaurant alone. So the Santa Ana restaurant contributed by making all of the raw ingredients for the bulkier items and trucking them to the library site daily. All fried items, including the sugary *bunuelos* (dessert chips) and the tortilla chips were cooked at the site kitchen, on an as-needed basis. All the mixtures for the chimichangas, the enchiladas and the shrimp cocktails were made ahead and sent separately, to be assembled on site.

The formal luncheon looked to be the biggest challenge for El Ranchito, and was therefore handled completely separate from the other events. The menu was custom designed, highlighting many of Mama Avila's original recipes, which she herself cooked. All the other food was prepared by a very experienced chef who was hired from a local country club. He and Mama Avila prepared a sample dinner before the event to determine exact seasonings, portions, garnishes, placement on the plate, etc. Since the style of the party dictated a more formal service style than the restaurant was accustomed to, the neighboring French restaurant was asked to provide experienced waitstaff. In addition, La Vie en Rose volunteered to order all the food to keep the ordering separate from the other parties, and it donated the use of its kitchen for the pre-operation.

Sixty employees were needed to serve the other events, and all six of the El Ranchito restaurants were summoned to send personnel—10 per unit. Ginger Perez from the Brea restaurant was the overall coordinator. One restaurant manager from each location supervised one particular area, such as the setup of buffet tables or the scheduling and assigning of staff. Perez recalls numerous organizational meetings with the managers to go over the specifics of the events. Each manager, in turn, met with the selected employees to review their responsibilities. Some temporary hard feelings did occur among employees left behind; but dispersing the labor needs throughout the entire chain brought the company more unity and team spirit, which still continues.

When it came time to set up each event, Perez prepared charts to designate time schedules and assignments for each employee. She also provided diagrams that depicted equipment and decor placement and the amounts of paper and plastic goods needed at the station.

Enjoying the success

The events went smoothly. The attendance of the entire Avila family at each event added to the "family" atmosphere El Ranchito wanted to create. A professional photographer was hired to take photos of the tables just before the parties—a practice Avila recommends so that quality photos can be added to a sales portfolio. El Ranchito had also hired its own public relations company who did a superb job publicizing the event in more than seven newspapers, including one article that ran as far away as San Francisco!

The only difficulty the staff seemed to face was in dealing with the dirty dishes, glassware and silver from some of the parties. When service-ware is used for large events, a well-planned system of busing and clean-up needs to be in place, and El Ranchito staff had no previous experience in this type of service.

Despite the frequent changes in plans, the hundreds of hours it took to prepare these events and the more than \$2,500 spent on Mexican pottery, decor and uniforms, Avila considers the experience to have been a positive one—not only because of the historic significance of the event and the sense of accomplishment and pride for her family and their restaurants but also because the magnitude of these events gave the El Ranchito staffs superb off-premises catering experience that can be used to qualify them for future opportunities. There should definitely be more opportunities coming because the library designated El Ranchito on its "preferred caterers" list—a concrete expression of satisfaction. □

Terri Woodard-Polster is a consultant and instructor for the National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation. She was hired by El Ranchito to add her expertise to the bidding process and to the event planning.

#112

Performance appraisals

Evaluating the work performance of subordinates is a key management responsibility, but it is one that is frequently avoided, rushed or handled poorly. This behavior is often the

result of the manager's inability to analyze the responsibilities, duties and tasks undertaken by subordinates, coupled with the discomfort that many people feel when they face the

possibility of a confrontation—particularly when they do not feel that they are on solid ground with respect to their human relations skills.

In an attempt to add to the confusion, cause further difficulty and muddle up all attempts at improvement, I have created a ready-made performance evaluation form managers can use to

evaluate their employees. Workplace performance factors are listed on the left. Degree of standards adherence is calibrated on the right.

Fisher's Law #112: Performance appraisals are important. They are your employees' psychic return on your investment in them.

Performance factor	Degree of standards adherence			
	Outstanding	Superlative	The Best	Highest
Attendance	Has never shown up	Saw him/her once or twice	Occasionally drops by	Physically present, mentally absent
Job knowledge	Less than none	None	Enough to be dangerous	Knows it all; does nothing
Accuraccy	Always in errorr	Usualy wrong	Guesses write sometimes	Ocasionaly correctt
Quantity of work	Zero, but it's better that way	Represents what not to do	Prodigiously nonproductive	Produces a little by accident
Quality of work	100 percent defects	Inordinately shoddy	Used as a "terrible example"	Regularly discarded
Communications ability	Talks while sleeping	Yawns and rolls eyes	Gestures wildly	Grunts occasionally
Creativity	Unimaginative	Hopelessly dull	Myopic	Stubbornly rigid
Loyalty	Reports to competitors	Loyal only to self	Starts rumors	Talks to media
Courtesy	Snarls when spoken to	Constantly wears a Walkman	Morosely sinister	Yells at customers
Stability	Wobbly	Dances and prances	Talks to self	Talks to computers
Drive	Usually in reverse	Occasionally slips into neutral	Has a dead battery	Stalls a lot
Promotability	Just our type	Has patterned self after senior management	Presidential material	Please promote to remove from my supervision

THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY RESPONDS TO THE NEEDS OF THE HOMELESS

The plight of the homeless and hungry in America has been one of the most compelling social issues of the 1980s. And although we have entered the decade of the '90s, there is little long-term relief in sight. According to Ann Hales, director of the homeless program at the School of Hotel Administration at Cornell University: "Today 1 percent of the population is homeless; and if economic, political and domestic trends continue as they have throughout the last 15 years, the number of homeless people could grow as high as 6 percent of the population within the next 15 years."

The hospitality industry responds

Many organizations throughout the hospitality industry have contributed and are continuing to contribute to addressing the problems of homelessness. Here are some examples of what the industry has done.

□ *Jessie's House commemorates restaurateur.* Jessie Benoit is the former proprietor of the Red Lion diner located in Northampton, Massachusetts. Prior to her recent retirement from the restaurant business, her establishment was a haven to many of the town's hungry and homeless. The homeless knew that at Jessie's a meal could be had without regard to one's ability to pay. In recognition of Benoit's generosity, a 20-bed shelter for the homeless was named in her honor—Jessie's House—in 1983. Since its opening, it has provided assistance to more than 2,000 people. Temporary housing and meals are provided while efforts are made to find more permanent housing. Other assistance, such as finding day care for children, is also available.

□ *Days Inn responds to needs of homeless.* Days Inn has responded to the plight of the homeless in both short-term efforts and long-term programs. In one instance, a Navy fighter jet crashed into an apartment complex near Atlanta, leaving 75 people

instantly homeless. The management of the Days Inn in the area responded immediately by organizing a Red Cross relief station in the hotel lobby.

Days Inn also has contributed to more long-term solutions to the problem of homelessness by offering the homeless jobs in its properties and interim housing at \$10 a day. (The homeless pay \$5; Days Inn matches that amount.) In exchange, participants agree to save a percentage of their paychecks toward a down payment on housing, to not use alcohol or drugs on the premises and to not entertain more than one visitor at a time. After some initial problems in screening applicants, the program has been quite successful, with nearly 66 percent of participants staying on with the company or moving on to more responsible positions elsewhere.

□ *Best Western International works to improve shelters.* Best Western International and the American Society of Interior Designers (ASID) have joined forces with the National Alliance to End Homelessness to improve the shelters used to house the homeless. Both groups contribute to interior design services, furniture, fixtures and equipment to shelters designated by the alliance.

□ *Smith College's cancelled meals help homeless.* Paul Garvey, director of dining services at Smith College in Northampton, Massachusetts, also serves as president of the board of directors of the Western Massachusetts Food Bank (WMFB). The WMFB, like other food banks nationwide, is a nonprofit organization whose purpose is to collect surplus food and distribute it to local nonprofit agencies, which, in turn, serve low-income families and individuals. In the early 1980s Garvey worked with a group of Smith College students to develop strategies for helping the hungry and homeless of western Massachusetts. The result of their efforts is the meal-cancellation program. Formally established in 1983, Smith College dining services donates 10 cents to the WMFB for every meal cancelled by a



Shooting Back

As the problem of homelessness worsens, foodservice operators are searching for ways to lend a helping hand.

by Linda K. Enghagen, J.D.



student. Students are apprised of the program early in the school year and then sign up for the meals they intend to miss. In the 1989-90 academic year, Smith College students cancelled 4,274 meals.

Feeding the homeless

Throughout the nation, there are a number of programs that provide food to the homeless. Some are large national fundraising events, such as the annual Taste of the Nation sponsored by Share Our Strength (SOS). Others are prepared-food programs that bring surplus prepared and perishable food from restaurants and caterers to agencies feeding the needy.

In Seattle, Washington, more than 60 restaurants, hotels and caterers have joined the fight against hunger by sending their overages to Seattle's Table. In its first year of operation in 1989 more than 100,000 pounds of food were transported by refrigerated van to 22 meal programs in shelters and missions throughout the city.

This fall, Seattle's Table has expanded its service to Saturdays and acquired a second refrigerated van, courtesy of the McDonald's Corporation. Program officials hope the poundage will double in 1990.

In addition, there are smaller fundraising events in which participating restaurants donate 10 percent of their gross receipts for any given day to the local food bank. Traditionally, Wednesday nights are selected for these events because they are usually slow nights for restaurants. For example, the 1989 "Piece of Pie" event in western Massachusetts generated approximately \$15,000 for the local food bank. In addition, some restaurants reported that their business for the night exceeded their typical Wednesday-night profit, even after they donated 10 percent of their receipts.

Beyond social responsibility

Regardless of one's view on the nature of the social responsibilities of businesses, it is clear that businesses and the communities they operate in have an effect on one another. More and more foodservice operations are taking the initiative to provide a helping hand. 

Linda K. Enghagen, J.D., is an assistant professor in the Department of Hotel, Restaurant, and Travel Administration at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

A new look at metropolitan areas, part two

The elderly magnets

*It is no secret that the population of the United States is getting older. According to the Bureau of the Census, the median age of the U.S. population is expected to be 33.0 in 1990—up from 30.0 in 1980—and it is forecast to rise to 36.5 by the year 2000. As people are living longer, more are entering their "golden years." As the second in a series, this article looks at metropolitan areas defined as "elderly magnets" in Metropolitan America: Beyond the Transition.**

If asked to name a state that is home to large numbers of senior citizens, most individuals would answer "Florida." And they would be correct. The "Sunshine State" contains eight out of the 10 metropolitan areas considered to be "elderly magnets" in the Population Reference Bureau's recently released publication, *Metropolitan America: Beyond the Transition*. According to the publication's author, William Frey, Sarasota (FL), West Palm Beach** (FL),

Fort Myers** (FL), Naples (FL), Ocala (FL), Lakeland** (FL), Medford (OR), Melbourne** (FL) and Tucson (AZ) fit the definition of "elderly magnet" areas. That is, at least 13 percent

Population growth in elderly magnets, 1980-1988

The six fastest-growing metropolitan areas between 1980 and 1988 were elderly magnets

Metropolitan area	Population		
	1988 (000)	Percent change 1980-88	Growth rank*
Naples, FL	138.5	61.1%	1
Ocala, FL	189.8	55.0	2
Ft. Pierce, FL	231.8	53.3	3
Ft. Myers, FL**	309.1	50.6	4
Melbourne, FL***	388.3	42.3	5
West Palm Beach, FL****	818.5	41.9	6
Sarasota, FL	260.6	28.9	19
Lakeland, FL*****	395.8	23.0	37
Tucson, AZ	636.0	19.7	52
Medford, OR	145.9	10.1	104

*among 283 metropolitan areas

**includes Cape Coral, FL

***includes Titusville and Palm Bay, FL

****includes Boca Raton and Delray Beach, FL

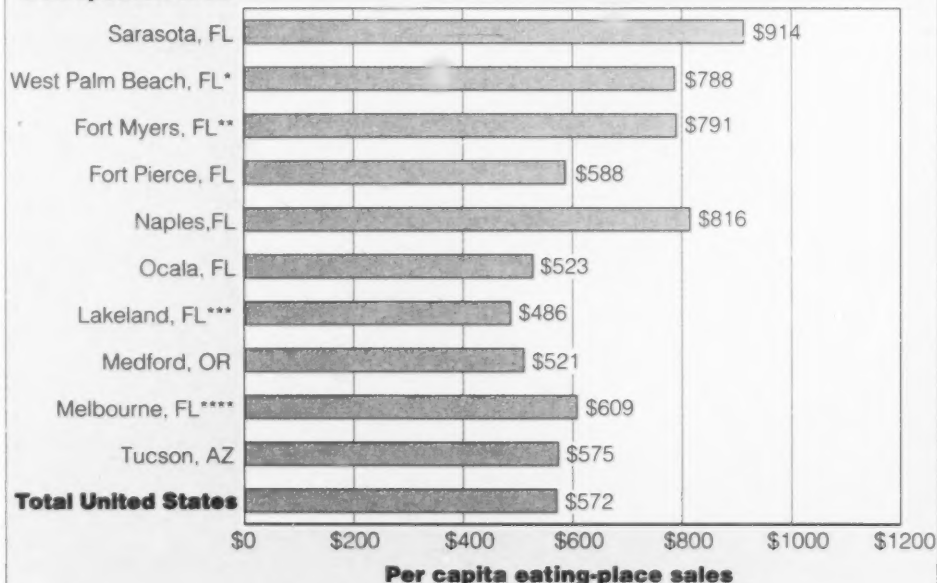
*****includes Winter Haven, FL

Source: Population Reference Bureau, *Metropolitan America: Beyond the Transition*

Per capita eating-place sales in elderly magnets, 1987

Among the elderly magnets, Sarasota, FL, recorded the highest per capita eating-place sales

Metropolitan area



*includes Boca Raton and Delray Beach, FL

**includes Cape Coral, FL

***includes Winter Haven, FL

****includes Titusville and Palm Bay, FL

Source: 1987 Census of Retail Trade, Population Reference Bureau, National Restaurant Association

*The first article, published in October 1990, discussed metropolitan areas that are baby-boomer magnets.

**Population data for these cities include population in their consolidated metropolitan statistical area (CSMA), a standard area defined by the Office of Management and Budget as "a large metropolitan complex with a population of at least 1 million." The following list includes other areas tabulated within the CSMA's for the cities cited: West Palm Beach—also includes Boca Raton and Delray Beach; Fort Myers—also includes Cape Coral; Lakeland—also includes Winter Haven; Melbourne—also includes Titusville and Palm Bay.

Eating places in elderly magnets, 1987

Among the elderly magnets, West Palm Beach, FL,* had the most eating places

Metropolitan area	Number of eating places	Number of people per eating place	Eating place sales (\$000)
Fort Myers, FL**	512	604	\$244,634
Fort Pierce, FL	300	773	136,319
Lakeland, FL***	445	889	192,366
Medford, OR	228	640	76,017
Melbourne, FL****	550	706	236,624
Naples, FL	241	575	113,079
Ocala, FL	219	867	99,198
Sarasota, FL	459	568	238,196
Tucson, AZ	832	764	365,751
West Palm Beach, FL*	1,255	652	644,868
Total United States	332,611	732	\$139,281,605

*includes Boca Raton and Delray Beach, FL

**includes Cape Coral, FL

***includes Winter Haven, FL

****includes Titusville and Palm Bay, FL

Source: 1987 Census of Retail Trade, Population Reference Bureau, National Restaurant Association

of the population in these areas were individuals 65 and older, and the growth rate in the number of senior citizens between 1980 and 1985 was 19.5 percent or more.

Senior population grows rapidly

While much emphasis has been placed on the "baby boomers," because of their relative numbers, it is important to note that the number of people 65 years old and older has been—and is expected to continue—growing at a faster rate than the population as a whole. For example, between 1980 and 1985, it is estimated that the number of adults 65 years old or older grew by 11.7 percent. The population of the United States grew by less than half that rate over the same five-year period—5.4 percent. According to Census Bureau projections, this growth pattern is expected to continue, with the growth in the number of senior citizens outpacing general population growth for every five-year period

through the year 2010 (see graph).

Among the senior population, the fastest-growing segment is likely to be adults 85 years old and older. The "oldest old" (as this group has been dubbed) is projected to grow 42 percent between 1990 and the year 2000. This figure compares with a lower 21 percent increase in adults between 75 and 84 and a 1 percent decline in the number of adults between 65 and 74. Despite the decline in the number of 65 to 74-year-olds, these seniors are projected to compose more than half of all people 65 years old and older.

This rapid growth in the senior-citizen population is particularly evident in the elderly magnets. According to the Population Reference Bureau, between 1980 and 1988 the six fastest-growing metropolitan areas were elderly magnets. Naples (FL), Ocala (FL), Fort Pierce (FL), Fort Myers-Cape Coral (FL), Melbourne (FL) and West Palm Beach-Boca Raton-Delray Beach

(FL) each recorded population growth in excess of 40 percent.

Older, but not necessarily poorer

One of the more pervasive ideas about senior citizens is that they have low income. The end of employment and subsequent retirement do often translate into a drop in income.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics' 1988 *Consumer Expenditure Survey*, the average household income for households headed by an individual 65 years old or older was much lower than the average annual income for all households—\$16,984 versus \$28,540. Nonetheless, more than one out of three households headed by a senior citizen (37 percent) reported an annual income of \$15,000 or more.

However, older households are generally smaller and are less likely to have to contend with such large expenditures as a mortgage and education. In 1988 the average household headed by a person 65 years old or

older included 1.8 persons and spent only \$5,551 per year on housing, compared with \$8,079 spent by the average household. Seventy-seven percent of this group were homeowners. Education costs for households headed by a senior were \$60 per year, compared with \$342 for all households. Households headed by a senior did, however, spend well above the average for health care—\$2,099 compared with \$1,298.

A look at the per capita personal income of the "elderly magnets" in 1988 further illustrates this point. Three of the magnets ranked among the top 20 metropolitan areas in the United States in terms of per capita personal income—West Palm Beach (ranked 10 with \$22,824), Sarasota (ranked 15 with \$22,100) and Naples (ranked 18 with \$21,595). These three plus another two—Fort Myers (\$16,890) and Fort Pierce (\$16,798)—had per capita personal income above the U.S. average of \$16,490.

Senior spending at restaurants: a dichotomy

With an average drop in household income of more than 40 percent for households headed by an individual 65 years old or older, it is not surprising that spending on food away from home is lower than the average for all households—34 percent of the food dollar, or \$872, compared to 43 percent, or \$1,612, for the average U.S. household.

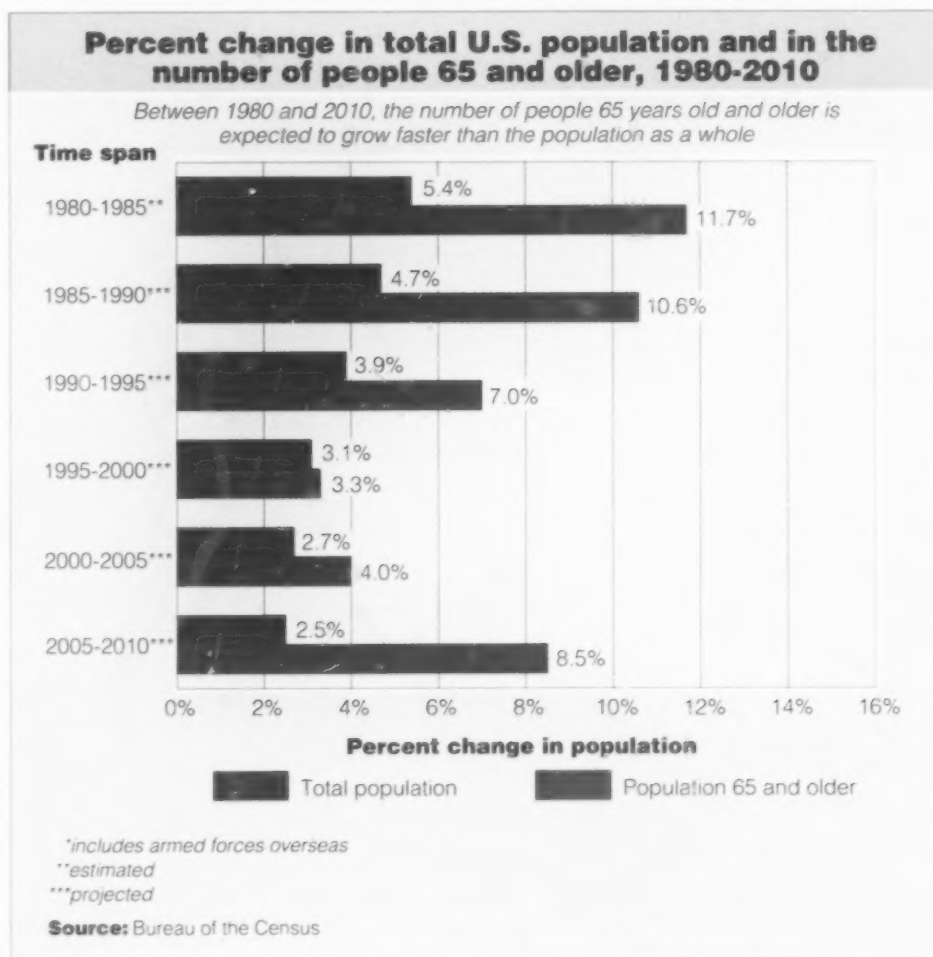
The oldest seniors (aged 75 and older) tend to have lower expenditures for food away from home than their younger counterparts. The 1988 *Consumer Expenditure Survey* indicates that house-

holds headed by these individuals spent 29 percent of their food budget or \$566 per year on food away from home, compared with 36 percent of the food budget, or \$1,081, by households headed by an individual between 65 and 74. It is important to remember, however, that the youngest group of seniors (aged 65 to 74) accounts for more than half of the senior population aged 65 and over.

Moreover, it is worth noting that according to the *1987 Census of Retail Trade*, seniors living in the "elderly magnets" were big spenders on food away from home. Per capita eating-place sales in seven out of the 10 "elderly magnets" was higher than for the nation as a whole. The average per capita eating place sales in Sarasota (FL) was \$914—the highest among all the elderly magnets. The only three metropolitan areas to record per capita eating place sales below the national average of \$572 were Ocala, FL (\$523); Medford, OR (\$521); and Lakeland-Winter Haven, FL (\$486) (see graph).

It is likely that the lower relative income of seniors in these areas may be attributable to the decreased spending on food away from home, since among the 10 "elderly magnets" Ocala, Medford and Lakeland-Winter Haven had the lowest per capita personal income.

Income is an important determining factor for spending on food away from home among seniors. Data from the *1988 Consumer Expenditure Survey* indicate that while all households headed by a senior spent 34 percent of their food budget on food



away from home, those with an annual income of \$20,000 or more spent more. Senior households with income between \$20,000 and \$29,999 allocated 38 percent of their food budget, or \$1,345, to food away from home. This percentage increased to 41 percent for senior households with an annual income between \$30,000 and \$39,999 and 46 percent for senior households with an annual income of \$40,000 or more. Even those senior households with an annual income between \$15,000 and \$19,999 spent roughly one-third of their food budget on food away from home.

As today's "baby boomers" become tomorrow's senior citizens, other metropolitan areas could see revenues from the increase in the senior market.

A profile of senior-citizen restaurant usage

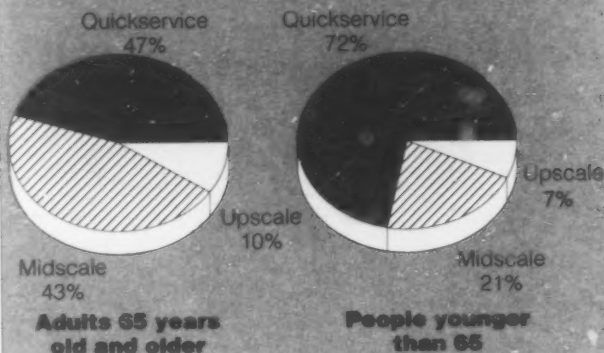
According to a 1988 National Restaurant Association CREST special study, quickservice restaurants captured the largest share of visits by senior citizens—47 percent—but this proportion is substantially lower than for younger consumers. Quickservice restaurants accounted for 72 percent of all restaurant

visits for individuals younger than 65.

Adults 65 years old and older showed a strong tendency to visit midscale restaurants. More than four out of 10 (43 percent) of all restaurant visits by seniors were to midscale restaurants. This share was much larger than for younger consumers, as midscale restaurants captured only 21 percent of restaurant traffic for individuals younger than 65. Adults 65 and older also showed a slightly higher proportion of total visits to upscale restaurants than did younger consumers—10 percent compared with 7 percent. Of these upscale

Breakdown of restaurant visits by restaurant type and age, 1988

Senior citizens had a higher proportion of visits to midscale and upscale restaurants than did people younger than 65



Source: 1988 National Restaurant Association CREST special study

restaurant visits, seniors visited more higher-check upscale restaurants—28 percent—compared with 25 percent for their younger counterparts.

In addition to being users of midscale restaurants, people 65 years old and older showed a greater tendency toward eating on premises—78 percent of visits versus 51 percent for people younger than 65. They were also more likely to eat out on a weekday—63 percent of occasions compared with 56 percent for younger consumers.

Lunch was the top meal for senior citizens at restaurants. More than four out of 10 visits (44 percent) to restaurants by senior citizens were for lunch. This compares with a lower 35 percent of visits by those younger than 65. Seniors were somewhat more inclined than younger consumers to go to a restaurant for breakfast (15 percent of visits compared with 12 percent) but had a smaller proportion of total visits to restaurants for supper (35 percent compared with 42 percent).

What are seniors eating?

The 1988 CREST special study indicates that seniors are not very different in their eating habits from their younger counterparts. For example, sandwiches were ordered on 28 percent of restaurant visits by adults 65 years old and older. This is only a slightly smaller proportion of orders than those by adults between 25 and 34 (35 percent) and adults between 35 and 44 (33 percent).

Other foods ordered on more than one in 10 restaurant visits by senior citizens included in descending order: coffee (42 percent), breakfast foods (33 percent), side salads (21 percent), desserts (16 percent), french fries and baked/mashed/stuffed potatoes (13 percent each), hamburgers and cheeseburgers (13 percent), soft drinks (13 percent), chicken (12 percent), hot vegetables (10 percent), fish and seafood (10 percent) and main-dish salads (10 percent).

—Nancy Michalski

Restaurant sales up in 1989

Total sales were higher at full-menu tableservice establishments in 1989 than in 1988, according to a special analysis of the 1990 National Restaurant Association Industry Operations Survey. This analysis was based on respondent establishments that reported operating data for two consecutive years.

Total sales for full-menu tableservice restaurants were up almost 5 percent in 1989, suggesting little or no real growth when menu-price inflation is taken into consideration. Total food sales advanced by more than 5 percent between 1988 and 1989, while total beverage sales increased a lower 3 percent. Occupation costs and controllable expenses increased 5 percent. Consequently, restaurant profit as a percentage of total sales remained stable at 3.5 percent.

Some of the more notable cost changes included:

- **A jump in administrative and general expenses.** This group of expenses is commonly considered to be restaurant overhead, and it includes expenses necessary to the operation of a restaurant. Typical administrative and general expenses include commission on credit-card charges and general insurance costs as well as personnel expenses incurred as a result of hiring employees. In 1989 administrative expenses increased 9 percent at full-menu tableservice establishments—the largest advance among all the controllable expense categories. This growth in administrative expenses likely reflects the growing importance of recruiting, training and supervising employees in restaurants and could indicate

increased emphasis on staff training programs.

- **Growth in sources of "other" restaurant income.** All restaurant operating income other than that from food and beverage sales is included in this income category, such as income from a gift shop or sales of a restaurant's waste paper, plastic and bottles. In 1989 "other" income per seat advanced a healthy 10 percent at full-menu tableservice establishments. Although the median income per seat from "other" sources totaled \$34, it is important to note the positive growth trend in this alternative income category. The advance reflects operator efforts to expand their income base as well as the increased emphasis on restaurant recycling and its associated revenues.

- **An advance in payroll and benefit expenses.** Higher payroll and benefit expenses were reported at respondent full-menu tableservice restaurants in 1989, compared to 1988. Median payroll per seat was up 5 percent in 1989, while median benefit expenses per seat advanced a higher 7 percent. Median payroll per seat in 1989 reached \$1,661, and median benefit expenses per seat increased to \$306. These growing employee and benefit expenses may reflect operator efforts to deal with a tighter labor market in 1989 as

Operations overview of full-menu tableservice restaurants 1988 versus 1989

Total sales advanced 5 percent at full-menu tableservice restaurants

	Percent change*
Total sales	5%
Total cost of sales	4
Other income	10
Total income	7
Total controllable expenses	5
□ Payroll	5
□ Employee benefits	7
□ Direct operating expenses	8
□ Music and entertainment	-5
□ Advertising and promotion	8
□ Utilities	6
□ Administrative and general	9
□ Repairs and maintenance	2
Total occupation costs	5

*All percent change figures are based upon median dollar amounts per seat and are not intended to be representative of or to set standards for the industry. Respondents providing two years of comparable data numbered 570. Number of respondents varies by line item.

Source: National Restaurant Association 1990 Restaurant Industry Operations Survey

well as employers improving the benefits they offer.

□ *A small increase in repairs and maintenance expenses.* Restaurant charges that involve painting, decorating and building alterations that are not considered improvements fall into the repairs and maintenance category. Median repairs and maintenance expenditures increased just 2 percent at full-menu tableservice establishments in 1989. This small increase could reflect operator efforts to limit or postpone repair and decorating expenses as a result of other cost pressures.

□ *A decline in music and entertainment expenses.* The median expenditure per seat for music and entertainment declined 5 percent at full-menu tableservice establishments between 1988 and 1989. This decrease suggests that, as a cost-cutting measure, entertainment was limited in 1989. It also could reflect

the growing consumer interest in casual dining.

□ *An increase in advertising and promotion costs.* Efforts to build customer traffic in a competitive environment have increased the importance of advertising and promotion at full-menu tableservice restaurants. Consequently, advertising and promotion expenses at these establishments advanced 8 percent between 1988 and 1989 to reach \$114 per seat.

□ *An increase in occupation costs.* Occupation costs, which include rent, property taxes and property insurance, continued to advance for full-menu tableservice operators in 1989. Median total occupation costs were \$389 in 1989—up almost 5 percent from 1988. The median rent expense per seat advanced 7 percent during the same period, while property insurance costs posted a decline of 4 percent.

—Hudson Riehle

Regional food preferences

A special CREST study examining consumers' regional food preferences at restaurants can help operators spot the strengths and weaknesses of particular concepts in various parts of the country. This article looks at the popularity of food items in 1989 and the changes in the number of orders from 1987 to 1989.*

Relatively speaking, in the Midwest, fried-fish sandwiches are the most popular menu item; but in the Northeast, veal is tops. In the South, biscuits are number one; and in the West, Mexican food is the favorite. When it comes to eating out, it's clear that restaurant customers across the nation vary in their food preferences. Often, the selection of food is dictated by the regional tradition and personality, the ethnic background of the population and the availability of different foods in a particular area. Here are some highlights from the CREST analysis on the relative popularity and growth patterns of various foods among the four regions.**

Northeast

□ From 1987 to 1989 frozen yogurt topped the list of the fastest-growing menu items, followed at a distance by pork, pasta, chicken sandwiches and pan pizzas.

□ Customer preferences for upscale concepts and Italian restaurants were high. It's not surprising, therefore, that in 1989 the likelihood of ordering veal and stuffed pizza was twice the national average.

□ In 1989 Mexican food still had not caught on in the region's restaurants—

the likelihood of ordering Mexican dishes was about one-quarter of the national average.

□ The likelihood of ordering traditional Southern food, such as biscuits, fried chicken and iced tea was about half the national average.

□ Although the likelihood of ordering heros/subs was far above the national average, this sandwich showed signs of declining; orders dropped 9 percent between 1987 and 1989.

□ Orders for other sandwiches, such as hamburgers, roast beef sandwiches and BLT club sandwiches, declined by about 10 percent each.

Midwest

□ When compared to the rest of the country, the fa-

*CREST stands for Consumer Reports on Eating Share Trends, a diary survey conducted by one of the NPD marketing and research companies.

**The Northeast encompasses the New England and Mid-Atlantic census regions; the Midwest contains the East North Central and West North Central regions; the South includes the South Atlantic, East South Central and West South Central regions; and the West includes the Mountain and Pacific regions.

The five most popular menu items by region, 1989*

Rank	Region			
	Northeast	Midwest	South	West
1	Veal	Fried fish sandwiches	Biscuits	Mexican
2	Stuffed pizzas	Chili	Fried vegetables	Wine
3	Variety salad sandwiches	Roast beef sandwiches	Enchiladas	Chinese/Asian
4	Heroes/subs	Heroes/subs	Fried fish	BBQ chicken
5	Nonfried fish sandwiches	Pan pizzas	Fried chicken	Eggs/omelets

* Relative to national average. Products noted demonstrate a much higher incidence of usage in the region than is seen nationally.

Source: NPD/CREST

The five least popular menu items by region, 1989*

Rank	Region			
	Northeast	Midwest	South	West
1	Mexican	Enchiladas	French toast	Steak sandwiches
2	Iced tea	Iced tea	Stuffed pizzas	Spicy chicken
3	Taco salad	Nonfried seafood	Omelets	Breakfast sandwiches
4	Biscuits	Rice	Wine	Fried fish
5	Fried chicken	Spicy fried chicken	Croissants	Coleslaw

* Relative to national average. Products noted have a much lower incidence of usage in the region than is seen nationally.

Source: NPD/CREST

favorite menu items in the Midwest were distinctly fast food oriented. In 1989 fried-fish sandwiches, roast beef sandwiches and heroes/subs were some of the most popular menu items in that region.

Between 1987 and 1989, frozen yogurt, pan pizzas, heroes/subs and pasta each posted substantial gains in the number of

orders—more than 40 percent each.

The likelihood of ordering items such as enchiladas, iced tea and nonfried seafood was about half the national average.

Orders for regular coffee, eggs and ice cream took a dive, decreasing by at least 15 percent each.

Midwesterners ordered less steak than they had in

the past; orders dropped 12 percent between 1987 and 1989.

South

Traditional Southern foods, such as fried chicken and fried fish, were popular in 1989. Also popular were side dishes typically served with these fried entrees, such as biscuits and fried vegetables.

Similarly, items that definitely would not be served with fried entrees or side dishes, such as french toast, stuffed pizzas and omelets, were low on the popularity list. The likelihood of ordering each food item was about half the national average.

Pan pizzas were a big gainer in the South—orders increased by 76 percent be-

The five fastest-growing menu items by region, 1987 to 1989*

Rank	Region			
	Northeast	Midwest	South	West
1	Frozen yogurt	Frozen yogurt	Frozen yogurt	Spicy chicken
2	Pork	Pan pizzas	Pan pizzas	Pork
3	Pasta	Heroes/subs	Pork	Frozen yogurt
4	Chicken sandwiches	Pasta	Pasta	BBQ chicken
5	Pan pizzas	Baked/broiled/grilled chicken	Baked/broiled/grilled chicken	French toast

* based on percent change in number of orders

Source: NPD/CREST

The five fastest-declining menu items by region, 1987 to 1989*

Rank	Region			
	Northeast	Midwest	South	West
1	Eggs/omelets	Regular coffee	Regular coffee	Veal
2	Hamburgers	Eggs	Wine	Taco salad
3	Roast beef sandwiches	Ice cream	Ice cream	Ice cream
4	BLT club sandwiches	Wine	Hamburgers	Cocktails
5	Heroes/subs	Steak	Steak	Thick-crust pizzas

* based on percent change in number of orders

Source: NPD/CREST

tween 1987 and 1989. Orders for pork increased 73 percent.

□ The likelihood of ordering wine was about half the national average and showed no signs of improving; orders for wine decreased 14 percent between 1987 and 1989.

□ Orders for hamburgers and steak also decreased—each by 11 percent.

West

□ With the region's proximity to the Mexican border, it's not surprising that Mexican food fared best in the West. The likelihood of ordering Mexican dishes was twice the national average.

□ The likelihood of ordering Chinese/Asian food was also greater in this region than in any other.

□ Wine was popular in 1989—an appreciation enhanced, no doubt, by the existence of many local wineries. Cocktails, however, decreased in orders by 20 percent between 1987 to 1989.

□ Orders for veal decreased 31 percent, and ice cream orders dropped by 22 percent.

□ The likelihood of customers ordering BBQ chicken was higher than in any other region and still growing; orders rose by 61 percent between 1987 and 1989.

□ This was the only region where frozen yogurt was not the fastest-growing menu item: It took third place to spicy chicken and pork.

□ Although the likelihood of ordering spicy chicken in 1989 was half the national average, it was the fastest-growing menu item. Orders increased by 69 percent from 1987 to 1989.

—Elizabeth Gordon

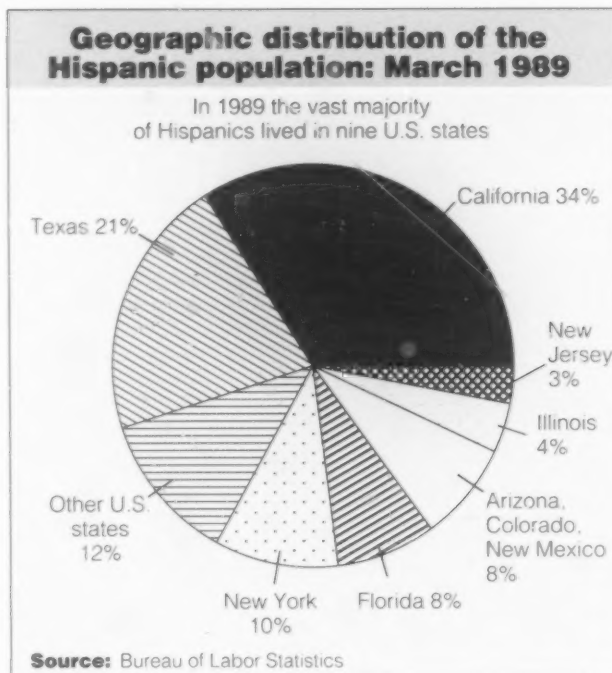
Understanding the Hispanic market

Although often overlooked, Hispanics are becoming an important part of the American marketplace. As of March 1989, there were more than 20 million Hispanics in the United States, and they accounted for nearly one in 10 citizens. When it comes to dining out, quickservice establishments, off-premises consumption and eating with children are tops with this market.

According to the Bureau of the Census, the Hispanic* population totaled 20.1 million in March 1989. Since 1980, this segment grew five times faster than the nonHispanic population. In March 1989, the Hispanic civilian non-institutional population was up 39 percent over 1980 census figures. This compares to a much lower 8 percent increase for non-Hispanic civilians during the same period. On the basis of the March 1989 estimate, Hispanics now constitute 8.2 percent of the U.S. population—up from 6.5 percent in 1980. By 2000, the Bureau of the Census predicts that the Hispanic population could be as high as 30 million.

Immigration to the United States is an important part of Hispanic population growth and is responsible for about half of the group's growth. For non-Hispanics, immigration accounted for a much lower 21 percent of growth.

It is important to note that the Hispanic population is culturally diverse. In March 1989, the U.S. Hispanic population included 12.6 million Mexicans, 2.3



million Puerto Ricans, 1.1 million Cubans, 2.5 million Central and South Americans, and 1.6 million persons from other Hispanic origins.

Most Hispanics live in nine states

In March 1989, 89 percent of Hispanics in the United States lived in nine states (see accompanying chart). Three states alone—California, Texas and New York—were home to 65 percent of the Hispanic population.

Other states where sizable numbers of Hispanics reside included Florida (8 percent of the Hispanic population), Illinois and Arizona (4 percent each), New Jersey and New Mexico (3 percent each) and Colorado (2 percent).

Census data reveal that Hispanic households were more likely than non-Hispanic households to be located in urban areas. In

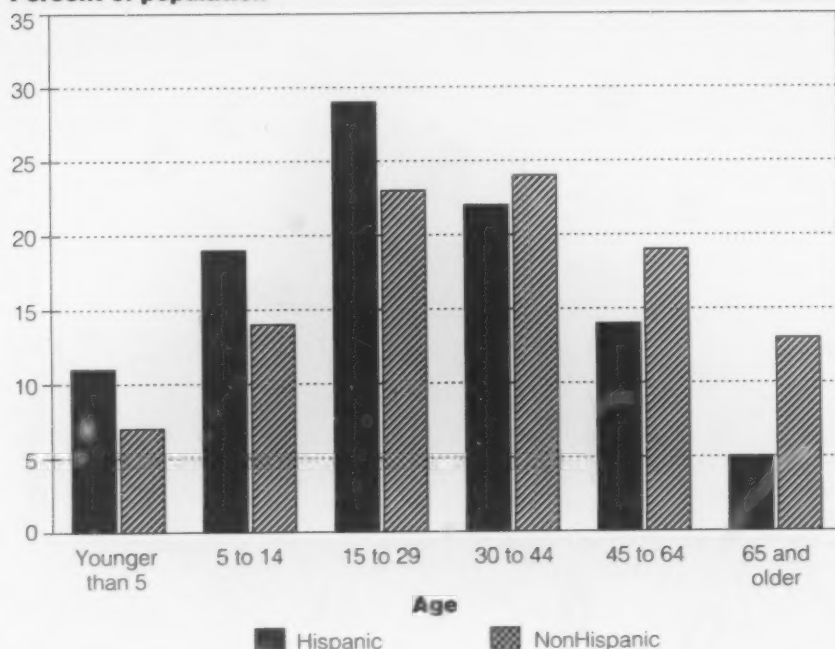
March 1989, 92 percent of Hispanic households were in urban areas, compared with 73 percent of nonHispanic households. According to the Population Reference Bureau, Inc., Hispanics are concentrated primarily in Southwestern metropolitan areas and in large immigrant ports of entry. In 1985, the two metropolitan areas with the largest numbers of Hispanics were Los Angeles (with 3.6 million) and New York (with 2 million). Miami, San

*Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race.

Age of population: March 1989

In 1989, 30 percent of the Hispanic population was younger than 15, compared with 21 percent of nonHispanics

Percent of population



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

San Francisco, Chicago, Houston and San Antonio followed—all with more than 500,000 Hispanics each.

However, the three major Hispanic groups—Mexicans, Cubans and Puerto Ricans—resided in different areas of the country. In 1985, the majority of Mexican Americans lived in metropolitan areas of the Southwest, Cubans in Miami and Puerto Ricans in the New York area.

Hispanic demographics differ

In order to effectively market to Hispanics, operators need to have a clear understanding of how Hispanics differ from the overall population.

□ **Age.** In 1989 the median age of the Hispanic population was 26—seven years lower than the median age of the non-Hispanic population. The median age for Hispanics varied substantially

among the Hispanic subgroups. For example, the median age of the Cuban population was 41 years—or about 8 years older than that of nonHispanics. By comparison, the median age of the Mexican and Puerto Rican populations was younger—24 years and 27 years, respectively.

□ **Family composition.** In March 1989, about 50 percent of Hispanic families had four or more members, compared with 34 percent of nonHispanic families. Among the subgroups, Mexican families had the highest proportion of large families (55 percent had four or more members). About one in six Mexican families had six or more members. Only 34 percent of Cubans had four or more family members.

Moreover, Census Bureau data show that in 1988 Hispanic families had more children under age 18 than their nonHispanic counter-

parts—65 percent of Hispanic families included children, compared to 48 percent of white families and 58 percent of black families. Only 9 percent of white families included three or more children under 18—half that of Hispanic families—and 15 percent of black families. Furthermore, 35 percent of Hispanic families included youngsters under six, compared to 22 percent of white families and 26 percent of black families.

□ **Income and employment.** The income of Hispanic families in 1988 was, on average, less than that of nonHispanic families. For example, the median income of Hispanic families was \$21,800, compared with \$33,100 for non-Hispanic families. Furthermore, the income distribution for Hispanic and nonHispanic families showed that about 20 percent of Hispanic families

had incomes of less than \$10,000 in 1988, compared with about 10 percent of nonHispanic families.

In 1989, Hispanic men were most likely to be employed in laborer occupations, while Hispanic women were likely to be employed in technical, sales and administrative support jobs.

In general, Hispanic civilians 15 years old and older earned less than those not of Hispanic origin. For example, the median earnings of Hispanic men was \$13,600—more than \$7,000 lower than that of non-Hispanic men (\$21,300). The median earnings of Hispanic women was also lower than those of their nonHispanic counterparts (\$9,200 versus \$11,200, respectively).

Earnings varied by Hispanic subgroup. Among Hispanic men, Cubans represented the highest proportion of earnings—36 percent earned \$25,000 or more in 1988. Only 18 percent of Mexicans earned that amount. The proportion of Mexican women who earned \$25,000 or more (8 percent) was also smaller than that for Puerto Rican, Cuban and other Hispanic women—about 15 percent each.

In addition, unemployment rates were higher for Hispanics than for nonHispanics. In March 1989, 7.8 percent of Hispanics 16 years old and older were unemployed versus 4.9 for nonHispanics. Among the subgroups, Puerto Rican males had the highest unemployment rate (12.1 percent).

Upscale Hispanics are often an overlooked market. Although the average Hispanic household income is low because recent immi-

grants usually receive low wages, affluent Hispanics are a growing part of the American marketplace. According to *American Demographics*,** the number of Hispanic households that were affluent—that had an income of \$50,000 or more (in 1988 dollars)—grew from 191,000 in 1972 to 638,000 in 1988—a 234 percent increase. Most of

this increase occurred during the 1980s. According to *American Demographics*, more than 2.6 million Hispanics lived in these households.

□ **Education.** Although Hispanics are making progress in terms of educational attainment, they lag behind nonHispanics. Sixty percent of young Hispanic adults (25 to 34 years old) reported they had completed four years of high school or more, compared

**the August 1990 edition

Hispanic dining-out behavior

In 1987 nearly 37 percent of Hispanic-American adults ate a meal out on any given day, reports the Gallup Organization. By comparison, nonHispanic whites ate out slightly more often (40 percent) than Hispanics, while nonHispanic blacks dined out slightly less often (33 percent). The incidence of eating out was most prevalent among the following segments of the Hispanic-American population:

- 18 to 24-year-olds
- college graduates
- those Hispanics with an annual household income of \$30,000 and more
- women employed outside the home and
- residents of the Midwest.

According to a CREST* special study, when Hispanics ate out between June 1989 to May 1990, 75 percent of their restaurant traffic went to quickservice restaurants, compared to 66 percent for nonHispanic traffic. Hispanics gave a relatively large portion of their visits to hamburger, chicken, pizza and Mexican restaurants; and they tended to order basic foods—many of which appeal to children, such as regular burgers, fried chicken, tacos and burritos. CREST suggests that to appeal to the Hispanic market, restaurants must emphasize value and families.

One-third of the restaurant visits made by Hispanics from June 1989 to May 1990 included children, compared to less than 20 percent of restaurant visits made by nonHispanics. Moreover, visits reported by Hispanics had a slightly larger average party size—2.1 for Hispanics versus 1.8 for nonHispanics.

During that period, Hispanic customers had an average per person check of \$3.60, compared to \$4.09 for nonHispanics. Although Hispanics spent less per individual eater at restaurants than nonHispanics did, they spent more per party because they were more likely than other consumers to include children.

Since more family parties were involved, deals played a larger role in Hispanics' dining-out behavior than they did for nonHispanics. The presence of children was reflected as well in Hispanics' above average propensity for using takeout and delivery, eating off-premises meals at home and purchasing restaurant meals on weekends.

*CREST stands for Consumer Reports on Eating Share Trends, a diary survey conducted by one of the NPD marketing and research companies.

The Hispanic population by type of origin (in thousands)

The Hispanic population grew from 15.4 million in March 1982 to 20.1 million in March 1989

Origin	March 1989		March 1982	
	Estimate	Percent	Estimate	Percent
Total Hispanic population	20,076	100.0	15,364	100.0
□ Mexican	12,565	62.6	9,642	62.8
□ Puerto Rican	2,330	11.6	2,051	13.3
□ Cuban	1,069	5.3	950	6.2
□ Central and South American	2,544	12.7	1,523	9.9
Other Hispanic	1,567	7.8	1,198	7.8
Hispanic population, as a percent of total population	**	8.2	**	6.8

** not applicable

Note: Data are for the civilian noninstitutional population of the United States

Source: Bureau of the Census

to a much higher 89 percent of their nonHispanic counterparts. (Only half of young adult Mexicans had completed 4 years of high school or more.) About 11 percent of young Hispanic adults reported that they completed four years of college or more, compared to 26 percent of nonHispanic adults.

Spanish language dominates

Most Hispanics do not use English as their primary language. According to Telemundo's 1988 Hispanic market study, 86 percent cited Spanish as the language used most often in the home. Nearly half (46 percent) said that they still primarily use Spanish at work or school.

Forty-seven percent of Hispanic adults said they were dependent on the

Spanish language. Another 22 percent classified themselves as bilingual, but still said they were very Spanish-language dependent. Twenty-six percent classified themselves as competent bilinguals, and only 5 percent said they were dependent on English.

Consistent with the strength of the Spanish language is the percentage of time spent with Spanish broadcast media. Hispanics spent 45 percent of their daily broadcast time with Spanish television, 26 percent of their time with Spanish radio, 15 percent with English television and 14 percent with English radio. Moreover, 76 percent of Hispanics surveyed agreed with the statement, "If an advertiser advertises in Spanish, I know he really wants my business."

—Elizabeth Gordon

Market Measure—August 1990

Because of an error made by the Gallup Organization, the Foodservice Market Measure inquiries were omitted from Gallup's August 1990 consumer omnibus. Consequently, there is no Market Measure this month. **Restaurants USA** will resume publication with September 1990 data.



**Public Affairs
Conference yields
results**

**Association makes
PAC contributions**

**Plans underway
for Senate
luncheon**

**Civil Rights Bill
vetoed
by President Bush**

Budget concerns

**Increase in child-
labor laws**

**Key deductions
may not be
renewed**

**Budget includes
alcohol excise tax
increases**

**Business-meal tax
deduction remains**

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Michael E. Hurst, owner

15th Street Fisheries, Ft. Lauderdale, FL

The Public Affairs Conference, which was held in Washington DC in September, helped us make our voices heard on crucial legislative issues. Restaurateurs met with their congressional representatives in 388 separate interviews. And it appears that our members of Congress were listening. One tangible result was 36 new cosponsors for the FICA repeal bill—27 in the House and nine in the Senate.

During the fall meeting of the association's board of directors, the Political Action Committee (PAC) met and approved \$170,000 in contributions to 60 candidates. Thus far, we have contributed \$548,216 to political candidates during the 1989-90 election cycle.

The Senate Luncheon Task Force met for the first time during the board meeting and discussed the luncheon to be held April 16, 1991, for senators and their spouses. The event will be hosted by our association and will feature an all-American menu prepared by the U.S. Senate Restaurant and members of the 1992 Culinary Team USA, formerly known as the U.S. Culinary "Olympic" Team.

Although both the House and the Senate passed the Civil Rights Act of 1990, President Bush vetoed the bill on October 22. Two days later the Senate fell one vote short of the two-thirds majority needed to override the veto.

As this issue of *Restaurants USA* went to press, a congressional budget agreement had not been reached. Actions taken by Congress thus far contain adjustments that will affect our industry both positively and negatively.

The House approved a provision that will significantly increase civil penalties for employers who violate teen-labor laws. The association is lobbying against this provision as House-Senate conference committee members attempt to reach a final budget.

Renewal of the Targeted Jobs Tax Credit (TJTC) and of the 25 percent health-insurance tax deduction for the self-employed was not included in the budget. As a primary user of TJTC, our industry has created jobs for thousands of low-income youths, workers who are disabled and other disadvantaged groups. This action may not have been feasible without the credit. Therefore, our association is lobbying for renewal of both TJTC and the health-insurance tax deduction. We are also asking for clarification on what happens to TJTC during its expiration period.

The federal budget also contains increases in the alcohol tax, which would raise \$10 billion over a five-year period. Because these tax increases do not take into account increases in state excise taxes, our association continues to lobby for fairer legislation.

On a more positive note, there was no mention in the budget of business-meal tax deduction cuts. Our industry continues to support the position that business-meal expenses are a legitimate cost of doing business and thus the deduction should remain. Both small and large businesses have discovered that conducting business during mealtimes is not only convenient but also successful.

**Environmental
Executive Study
Group formed**

**Monterey Wine
Festival to be held
March 17-19, 1991**

**Please return
completed
questionnaires**

**The right time
to promote your
business**

**SERVSAFE course
available**

The Multi-Unit Environmental Affairs Officers Executive Study Group met for the first time on October 22 and 23 in Washington DC. Representatives of about 20 multi-unit chains were present at the meeting to discuss the direction our industry will take on environmental concerns. The group will meet twice a year. Look for locations and dates of future meetings on the "association meetings" page of **Restaurants USA**. If you would like more information about this study group, contact Rosemary Curtis at the association's Chicago office for details. She can be reached at 1-312-853-2525.

More than 200 wineries from the state of California will pour 900 wines at the annual Monterey Wine Festival, to be held March 17-19, 1991, at the Monterey Conference Center in Monterey, California.

The wine producers themselves will be on hand during the nightly wine tastings to provide information about their wines. Champagne and dessert wines will be sampled on Sunday, white wines will be featured on Monday and red wines will be served on Tuesday. Attendees will learn valuable guidelines about pairing wines with food.

The National Restaurant Association's research department has sent questionnaires to members about the wages and benefits paid to salaried employees. Please complete this survey and return it in the envelope provided. Your cooperation will ensure a comprehensive and meaningful result.

With today's uncertain economy, operators may want some fresh ideas to keep their establishments competitive. Tough times are the right times to promote your business. On the back of this month's **Restaurants USA**, there is information about **PRO-MOTION**, an association newsletter filled with promotional and advertising ideas. The bimonthly publication tells you how to get the word out about your establishment at very little cost. It's an investment worth making.

There has been much press coverage lately about the public's concern about sanitation and foodborne diseases. The best way to reassure the public is to be sure your employees are well trained in food safety and sanitation. The Educational Foundation of the National Restaurant Association offers a **SERVSAFE** employee manual and a four-part video training series, which are designed to train and encourage employees to follow safe food-handling practices. For more information about these and other **SERVSAFE** products, contact the educational foundation at 1-800-765-2122.

In September 111 new members joined the National Restaurant Association. We also gained Indiana as a dual-membership state, bringing the total of dual-membership states to 20. We welcome you and assure you that your active participation in the association will strengthen your operation as well as the industry as a whole.

Sincerely,



Michael E. Hurst
President and Chairman of the Board

Canned coffee on the rocks

When Eli Feder of Brooklyn announced that he wanted to create and sell canned iced coffee, no one would listen to him seriously. But to the 34-year-old entrepreneur it just made sense: Canned iced tea was so popular, why not iced coffee?

After two years of fighting the disinterested and the disbelieving, Feder has finally triumphed. His canned coffee has reached

the stores, where it sells for 69 cents to \$1.29 per can. So far, sales look good—so good that Feder projects first-year totals for his company, P'nosh Beverages, to reach \$18 to \$24 million.

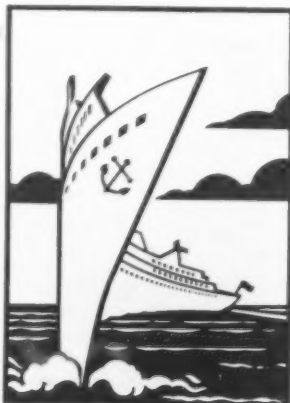
And those snickering disbelievers are listening more closely. Rumor has it that the Coca-Cola Co. is considering the development of an iced coffee. Cold coffee, which began as such a joke to so many, may just become the next "hot" beverage market.

—Entrepreneur

Sail away to slender

A sun-drenched vacation no longer means saying "bon voyage" to fitness and good nutrition.

Although cruise lines are famous for their sumptuous cuisine and often present passengers with not three but five or six meals per day—from breakfast to brunch to midnight supper—Norwegian Cruise Line has launched a lean-menu plan aboard its newly refurbished ship, the *S. S. Norway*, as part of the Roman Spa, a comprehensive spa



facility that includes hydrotherapy baths, herbal treatments and fitness programs, as well as low-calorie cuisine.

"Spa meals" are offered three times a day and are

Service with a smile—and a clear-cut price

Every restaurant may have its own approach to service, but American Express recently discovered that there are some elements that matter more to Americans than others.

A telephone survey among card holders revealed that diners rated a

greeting at the door as the most important service feature. A complimentary cocktail placed second. More than half of those surveyed (55 percent) wanted to know their server's name—a figure that rose to 72 percent in the West (but dropped to 43 percent in the South).

Such pleasant pampering and personal touches, however, do not allow practical matters to slide. Seventy-nine percent of those sur-

"Now playing ..."

Marketing food in America is becoming quite a theatrical production, as more and more manufacturers stretch creative food presentation to new limits in their search for "enter-taining" foods that don't merely sit on the plate but get up and perform.

RJR Nabisco Inc. was recently awarded a patent on its latest "active" treat—a "volcanic" cookie that erupts in a sugary explosion when heated in the microwave.



As millions of dollars are spent to study chemical reactions in foods and developments in biotechnology, foods that curl, crisp, glow, grow and change color could be just around the corner.

Rice Krispies, after all, didn't grab breakfast eaters with taste alone—it was "Snap, Crackle, Pop!" that perked up their ears as well as their taste buds.

—Los Angeles Times

available to all passengers. Developed by a nutritionist and prepared by the spa's specially trained chef, the meals are low cholesterol and low fat and use only fresh ingredients.

—Norwegian Cruise Line

A "memorial" experience

Most diners who bite into a submarine sandwich rarely think about its seagoing namesake, much less about the valiant crews who made

those vessels such a strong wartime force. Seawest Sub Shops, however, want to make their customers think and remember.

The sandwich chain, headquartered in Bellevue, Washington, is launching a campaign to focus attention on the more than 3,500 officers and crew members who perished in the 52 submarines lost in World War II. The campaign, which began in August, involves each location putting up either a plaque or poster dedicated to those heroic men.

The chain's management is working closely with the Washington state chapter of the U.S. Submarine Veterans of World War II on this venture and hopes to spread the word to other state chapters in the near future.

—Seawest Sub Shops

veyed wanted to know the price of daily specials before ordering. Sixty-three percent wanted to read those special prices rather than receive a personal recitation from their server.

When it came to tipping, however, most customers took a more relaxed attitude. Two-thirds of respondents reported that they calculate the tip on the basis of the total bill, including tax.

—New York Times



NATIONAL RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION
1200 17th Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20036

PRO-MOTION

Posting Profits with Direct Mail

MAY/JUNE 1990
VOLUME 8 NUMBER 2
THE RESTAURANT PROMOTER

FEATURES

Direct Mail
Sue Ellen
In this issue, Sue Ellen discusses the importance of direct mail in a restaurant's marketing program. She provides tips on how to design effective direct mail pieces and how to track their results.

Targeting new customers
John Doe
This article explores various techniques for identifying and reaching new potential customers through direct mail.

Local lists
Jane Smith
Jane Smith shares her experience in building and utilizing local mailing lists to promote her restaurant.



Eye-opening

In this issue and the next, you can see how direct mail can be used to increase your restaurant's profits. This issue focuses on the basics of direct mail, while the next issue will delve into more advanced techniques.

Building a mailing list

Who do you want to reach with your messages? Regular customers? New customers? The answer is, of course, both. This article provides a step-by-step guide to building a mailing list that will help you reach both groups effectively.



One-year subscription (6 issues) just \$15 for association members

PRO-MOTION newsletter is full of ideas that build customer traffic and profits.

To subscribe, or for more information, call the National Restaurant Association at (800) 424-5156 or (202) 331-5900.